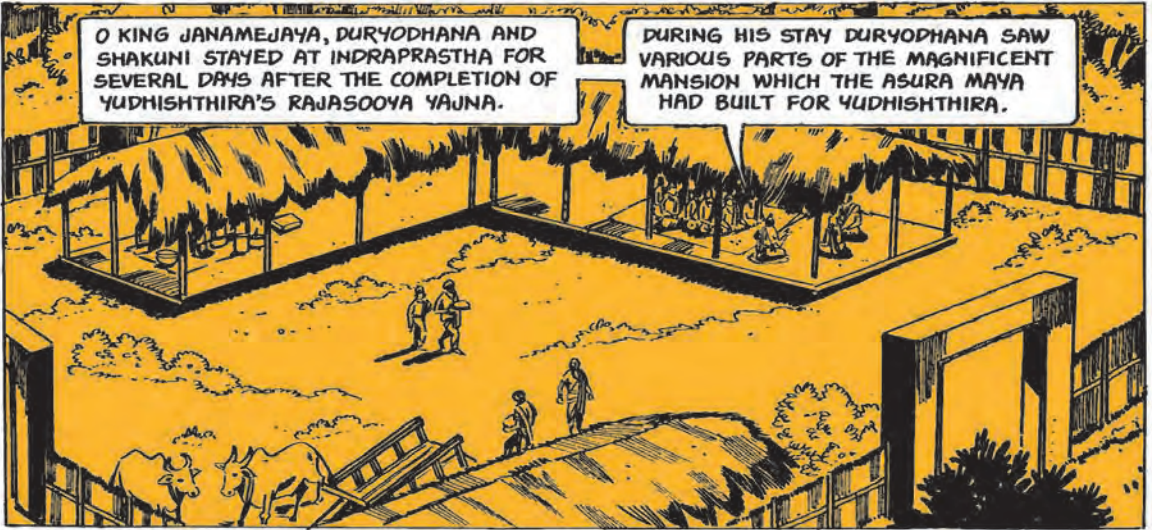
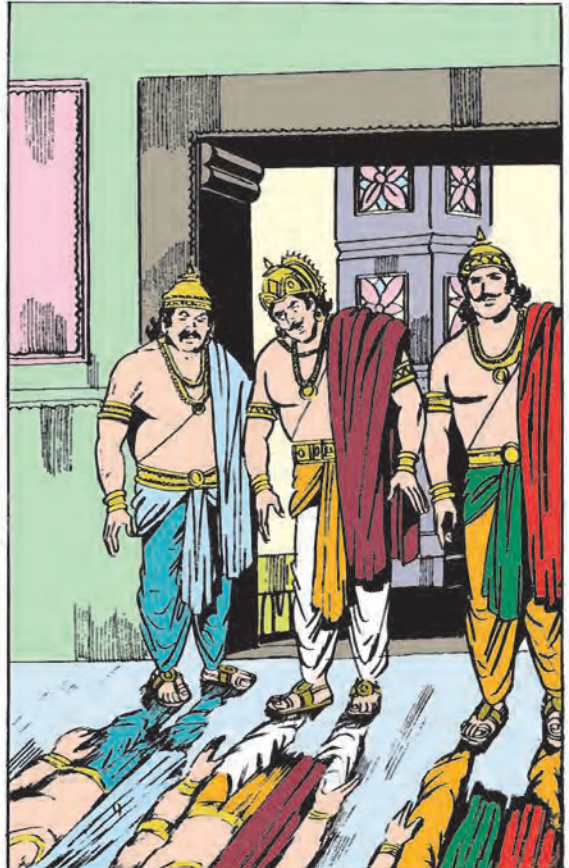
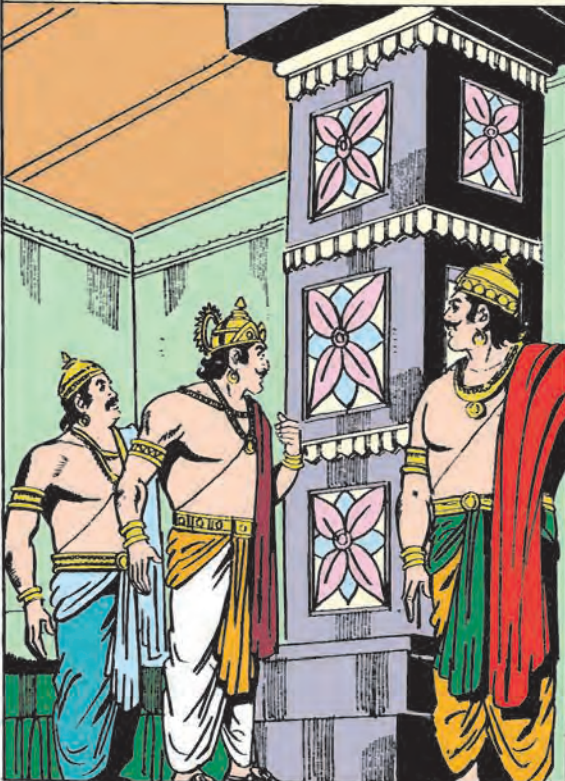


# Mahabharata - 18

## INDRAPRASTHA LOST

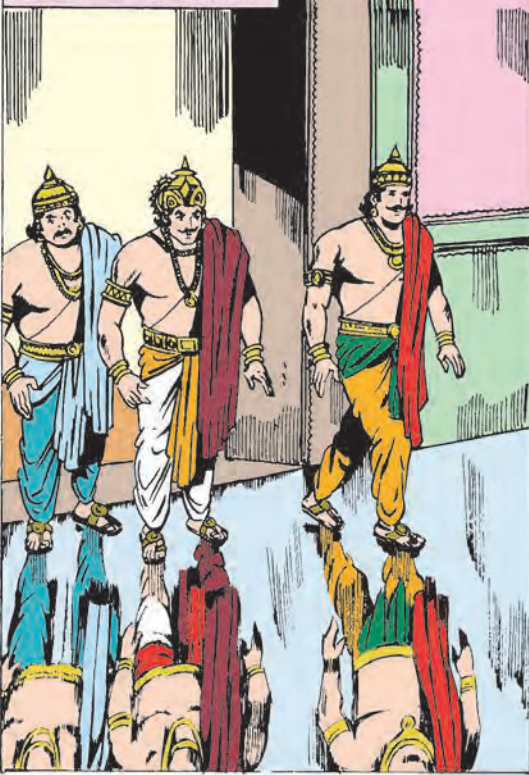


"IN THAT MANSION DURYODHANA BEHELD WONDROUS OBJECTS WHICH HE HAD NEVER SEEN IN HIS OWN CAPITAL HASTINAPURA.

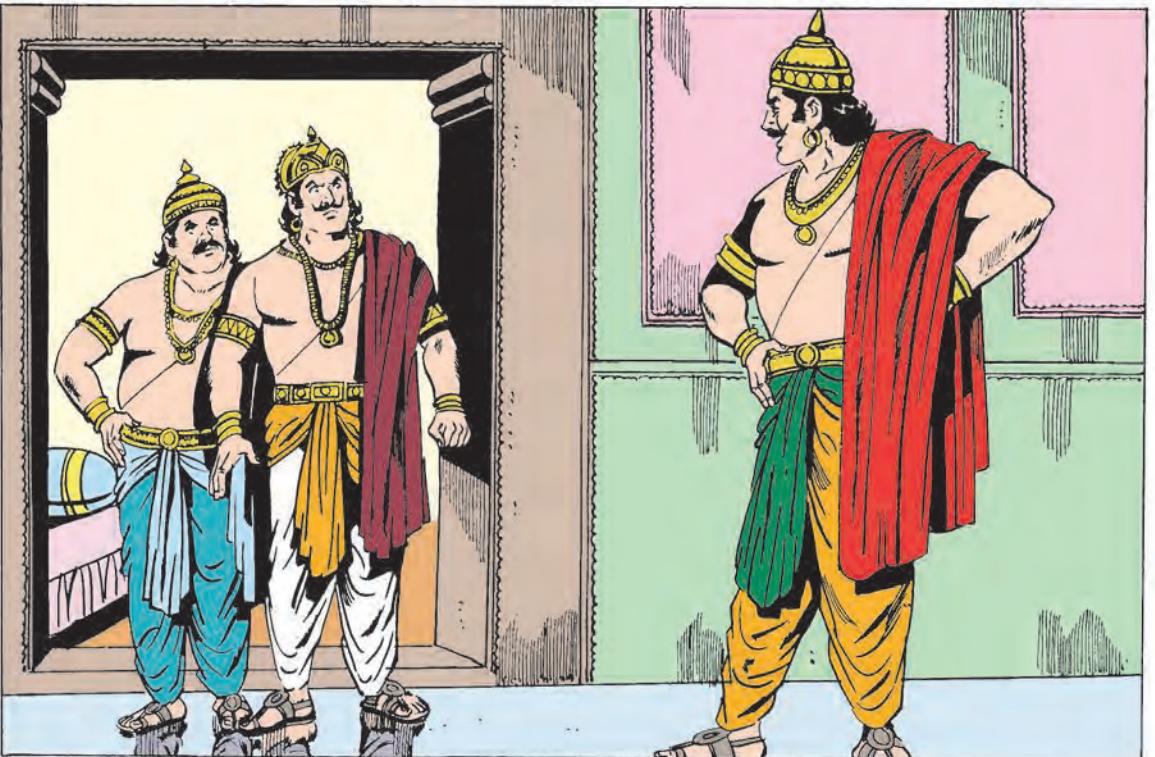
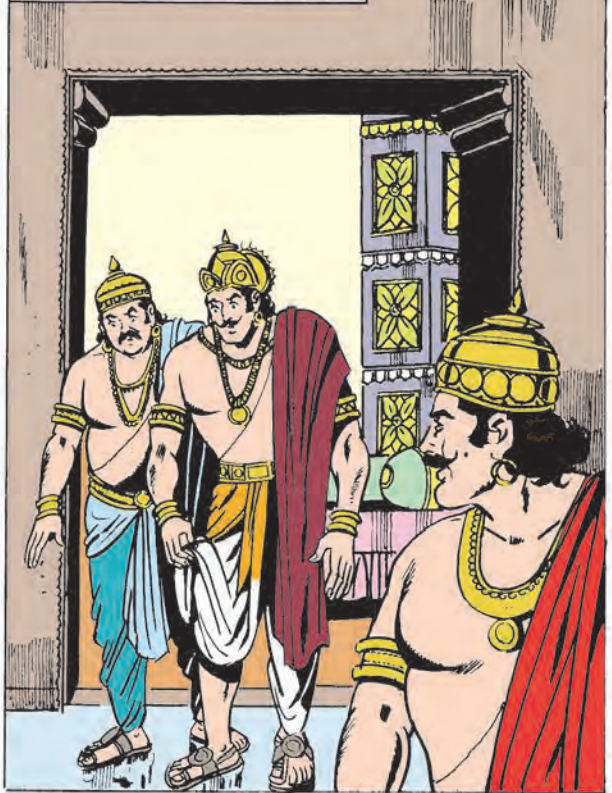




"WHILE ON THE ROUNDS OF THE PALACE,  
DURYODHANA MISTOOK A POLISHED CRYSTAL  
FLOOR FOR A LAKE..."

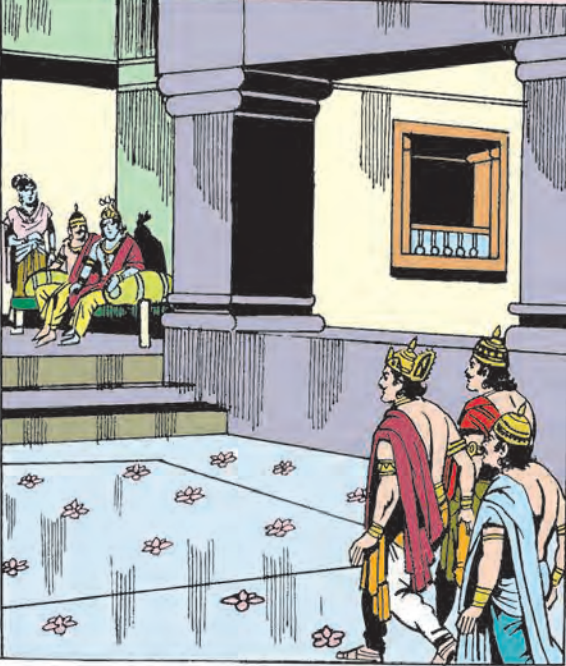


"...AND TUCKED UP HIS GARMENTS IN ORDER  
NOT TO MAKE THEM WET."





THEN, A LITTLE AHEAD, MISTAKING A LOTUS POND FOR A FLOOR PAVED WITH STONE...



"... DURYODHANA STEPPED INTO THE WATER AND FELL IN IT.



THIS EVOKED LAUGHTER FROM NOT ONLY BHEEMA...

... BUT ALSO THE OTHER PANDAVAS.



"ELSEWHERE IN THE MANSION HE STOOD BEFORE AN OPEN ROOM THINKING THAT IT WAS CLOSED..."



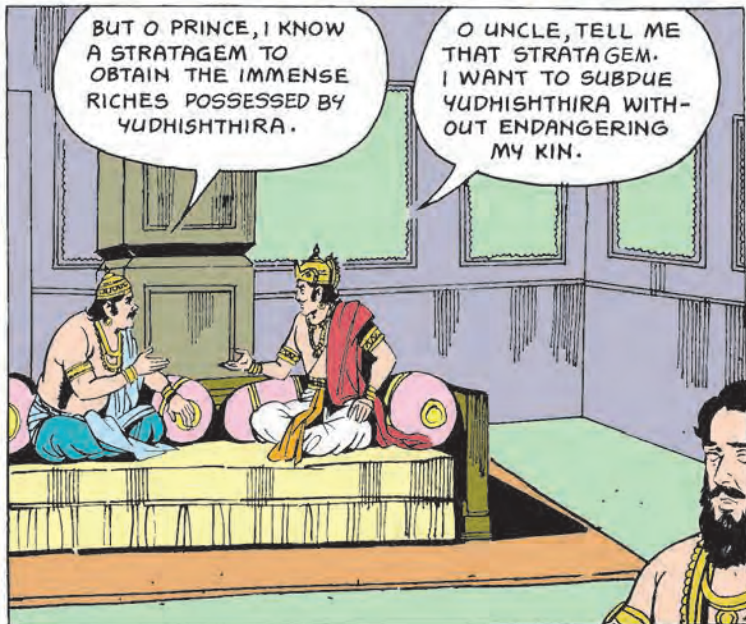
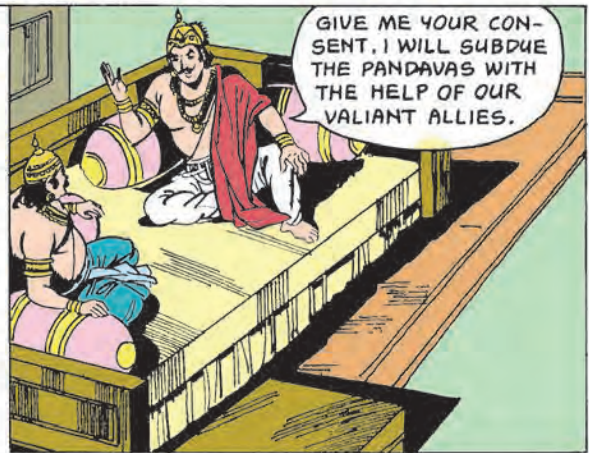
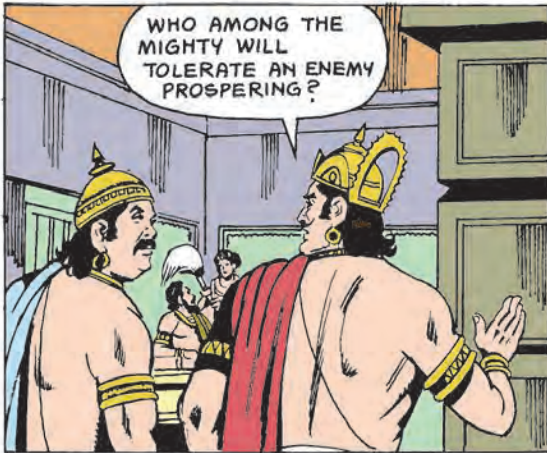
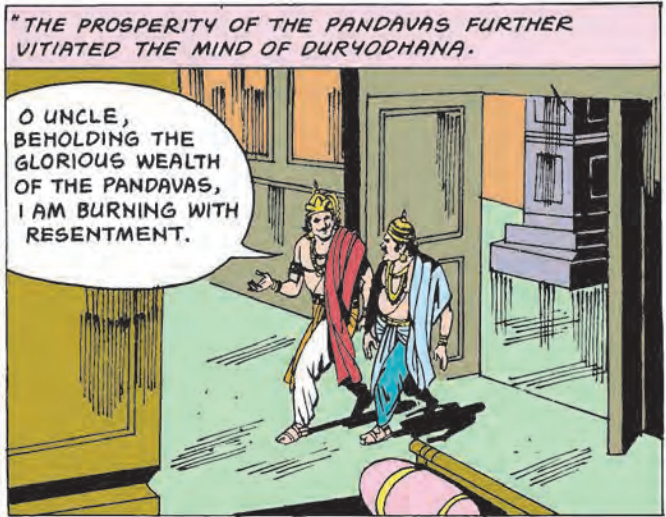
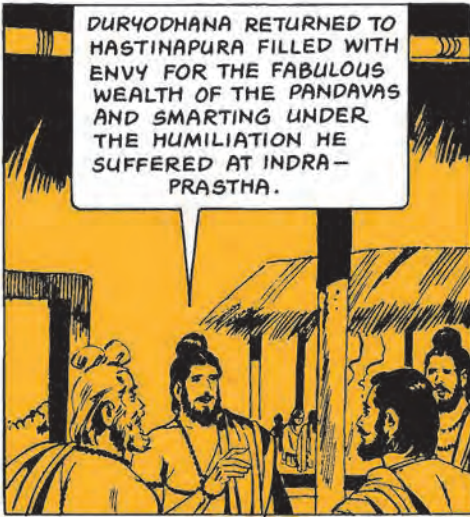
"... AND BANGED HIS HEAD WHEN HE MISTOOK A SECTION OF THE WALL FOR AN OPEN DOOR.



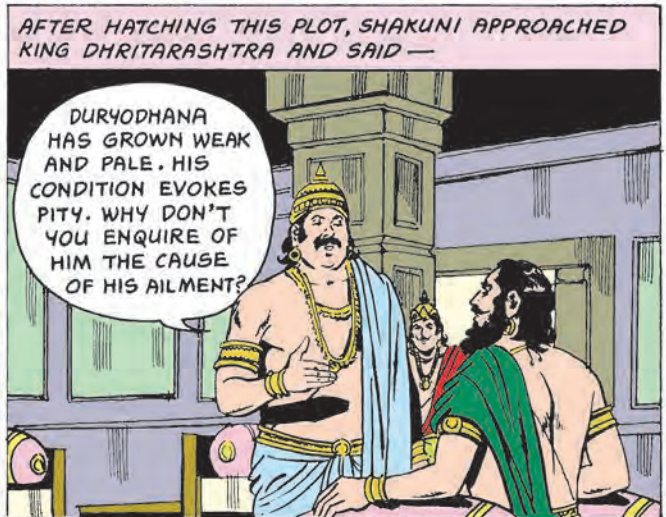
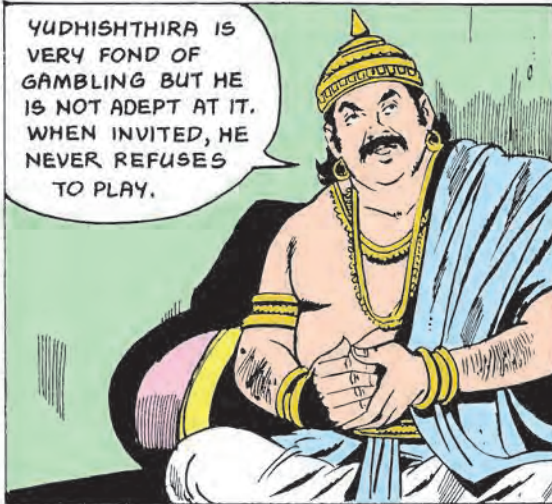
NAKULA AND SAHADEVA RUSHED AHEAD TO SUPPORT HIM. BHEEMA HAD A HEARTY LAUGH.



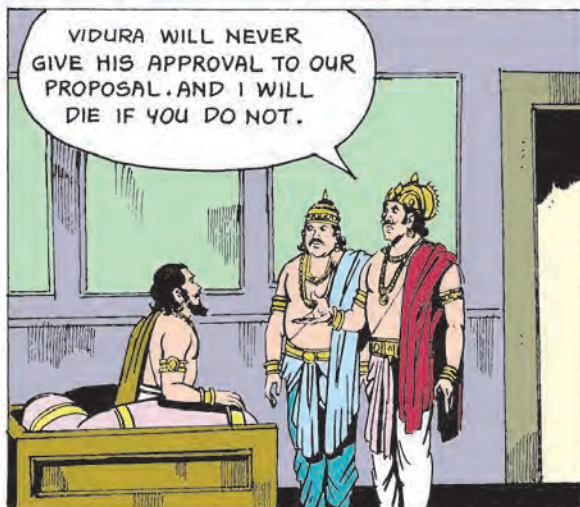
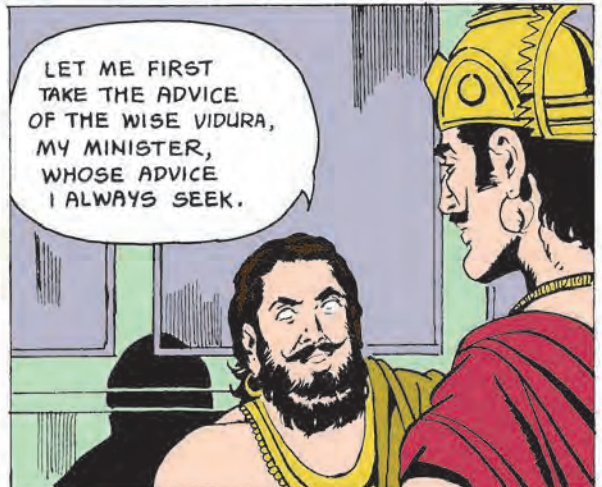
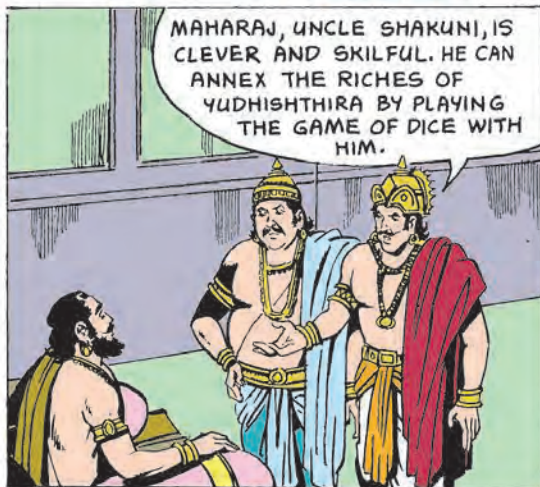
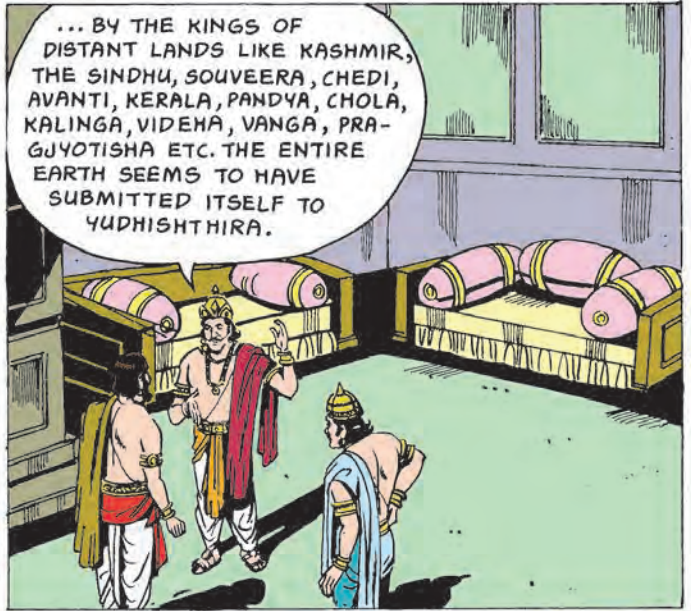
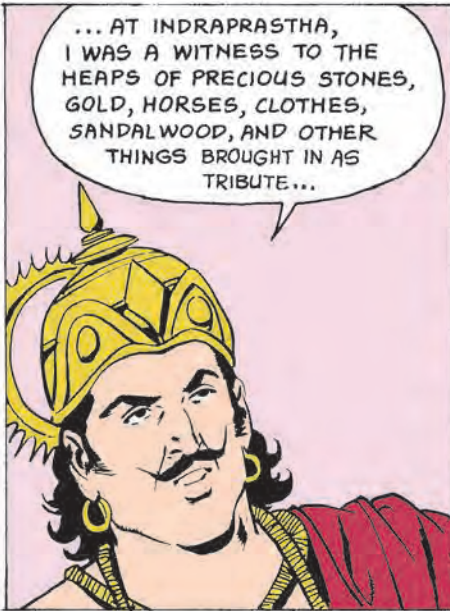










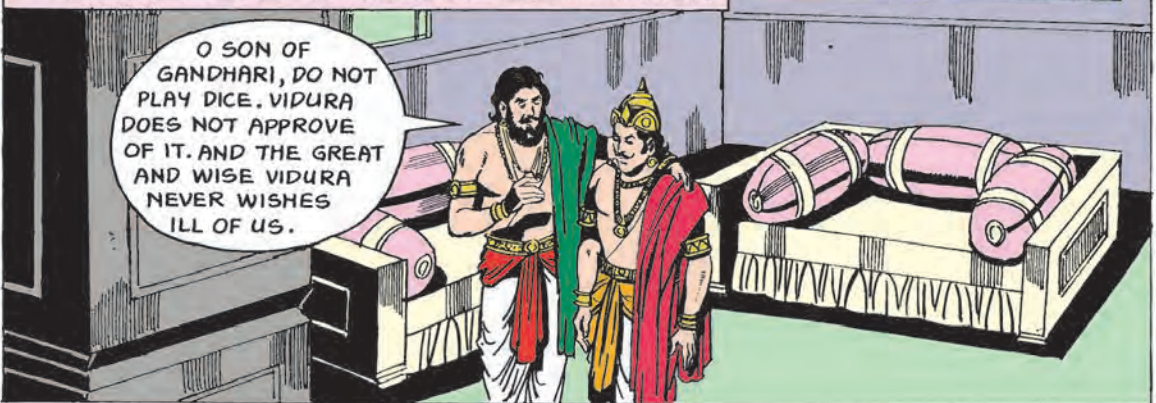




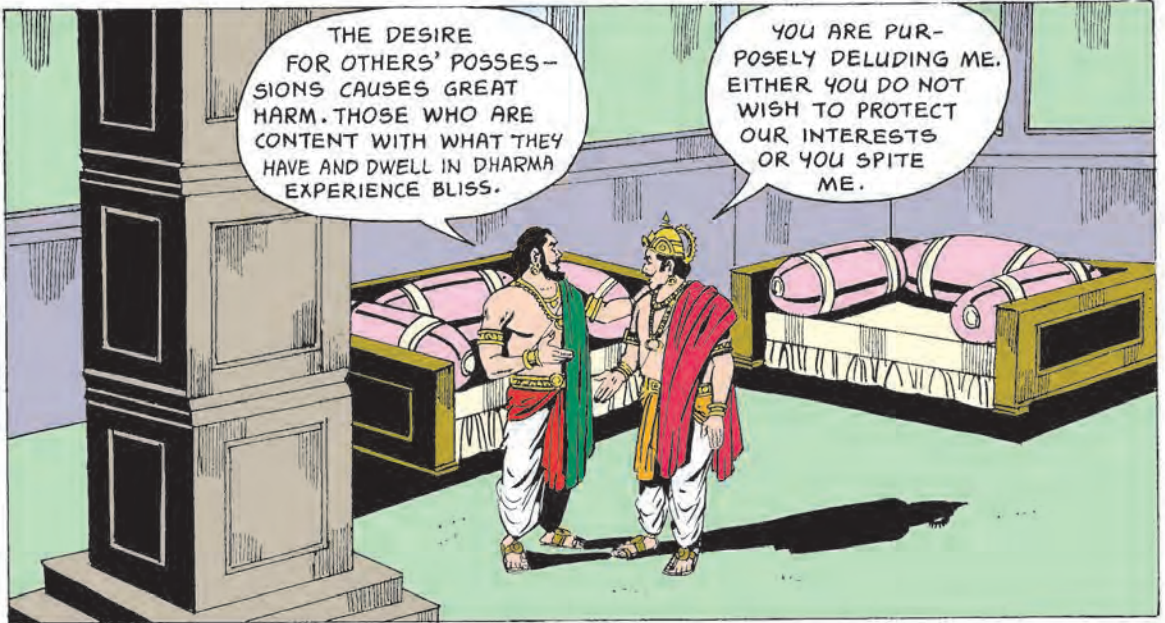
THAT GREAT SOUL CAME TO DHRITARASHTRA,  
BOWED TO HIM AND SAID —



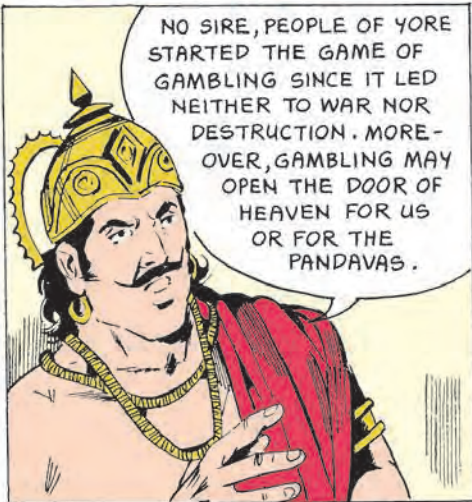
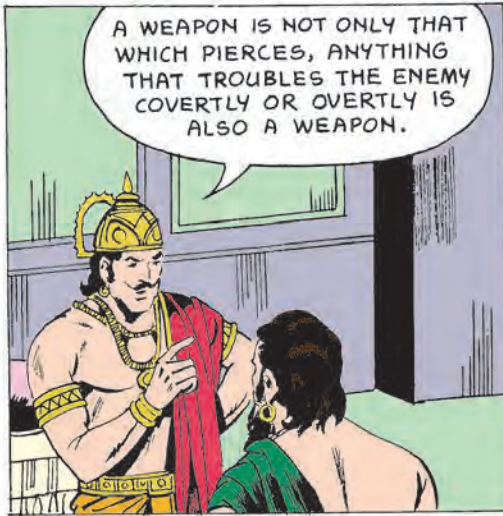
"AFTER LISTENING TO VIDURA, DHRITARASHTRA SPOKE TO  
DURYODHANA WHEN THERE WAS NO ONE ELSE WITH THEM.





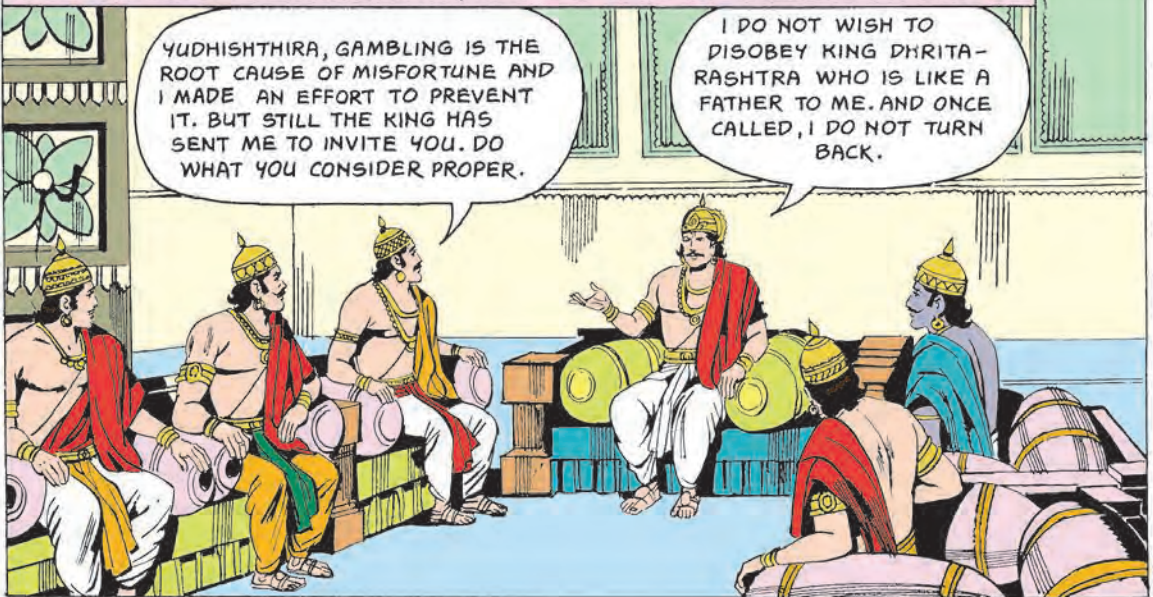








THUS INSTRUCTED BY DHRITARASHTRA, VIDURA WENT TO THE PANDAVAS AND SAID—



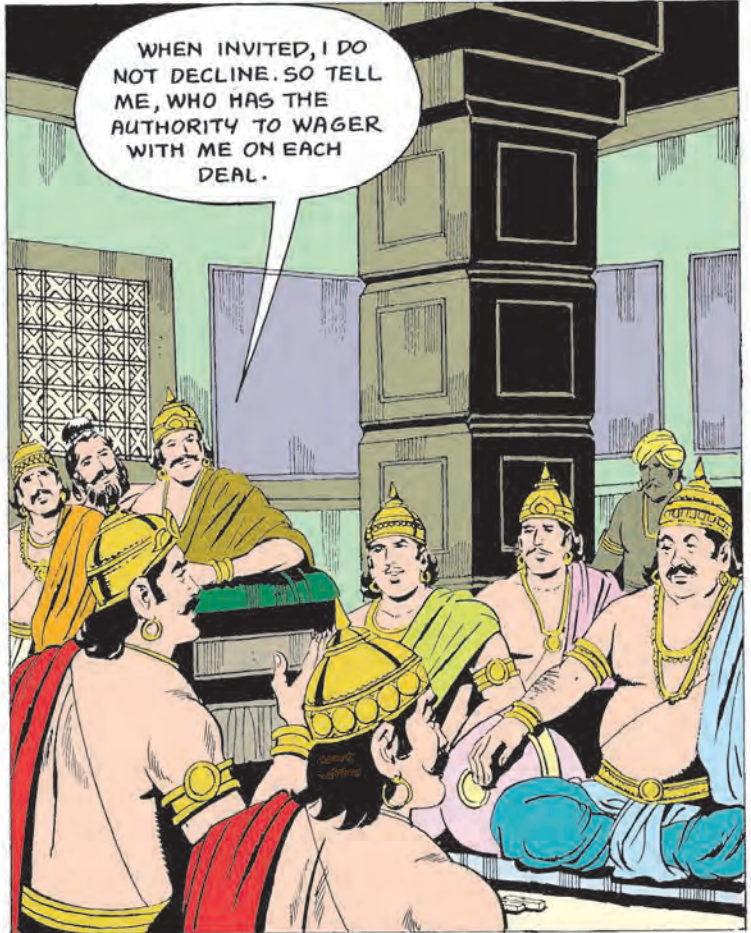
"ON THE FOLLOWING DAY, THE PANDAVAS, WITH DRAUPADI AND OTHER COMPANIONS, REACHED HASTINAPURA.



"NEXT MORNING AFTER PERFORMING THEIR DAILY RELIGIOUS RITES THE PANDAVAS WENT TO THE HALL OF GAMBLING, WHERE SHAKUNI ADDRESSED YUDHISHTHIRA —









THEN DURYODHANA SAID —

I SHALL PROVIDE THE STAKES AND UNCLE SHAKUNI WILL PLAY ON MY BEHALF.

IT IS IMPROPER THAT ONE SHOULD PLAY FOR ANOTHER. HOWEVER, LET THE PLAY COMMENCE IN THE MANNER YOU DESIRE.



WHEN THE PLAY COMMENCED ALL THE KINGS WITH DHRTA-RASHTRA AT THEIR HEAD OCCUPIED THEIR SEATS.



BHEESHMA, DRONA, KRIPA AND THE GREAT AND WISE VIDURA SAT BEHIND THEM WITH HEAVY HEARTS.



THEN YUDHISHTHIRA SAID —

I WAGER THIS VALUABLE NECKLACE OF PEARLS SET IN EXCELLENT GOLD. WHAT IS YOUR STAKE? I WILL WIN THIS DEAL.

I TOO HAVE JEWELS AND VARIOUS KINDS OF WEALTH. AND I SHALL WIN THIS DEAL.

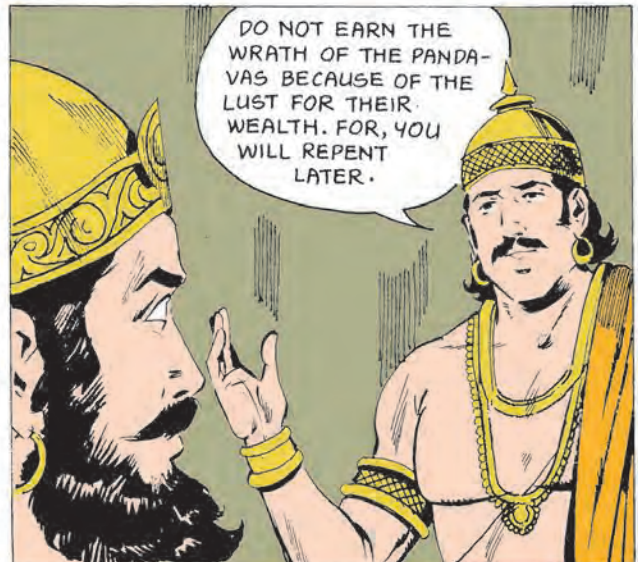
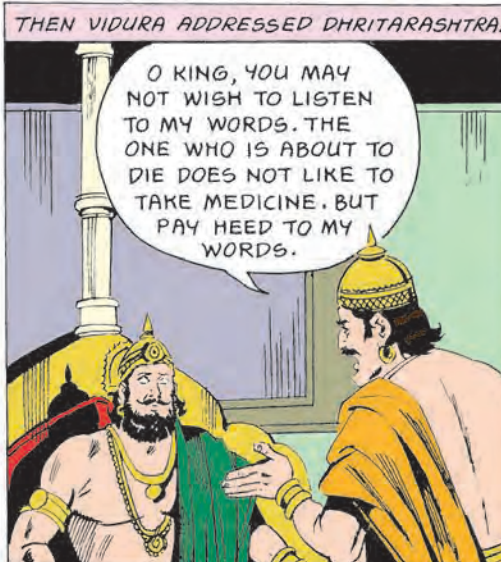
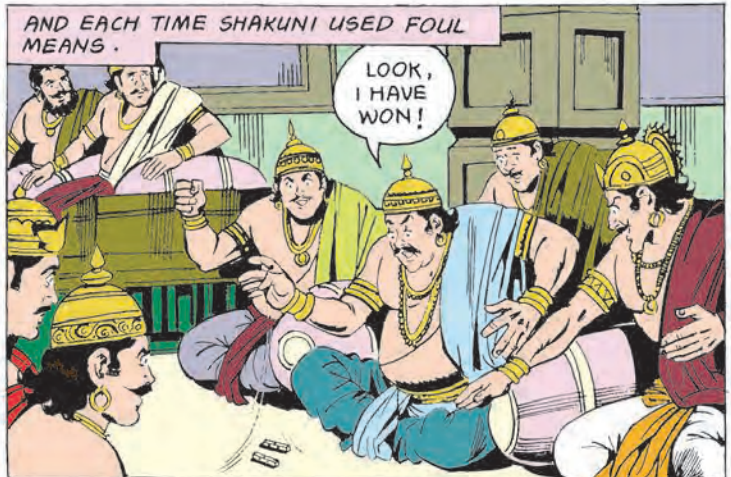
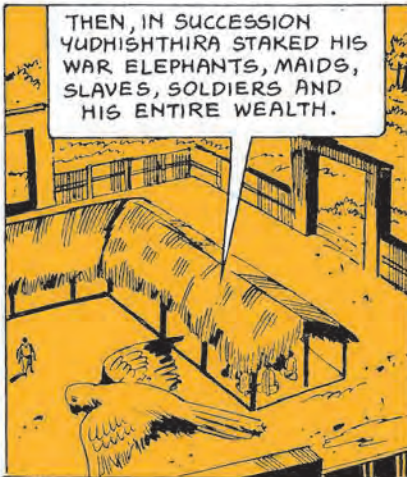
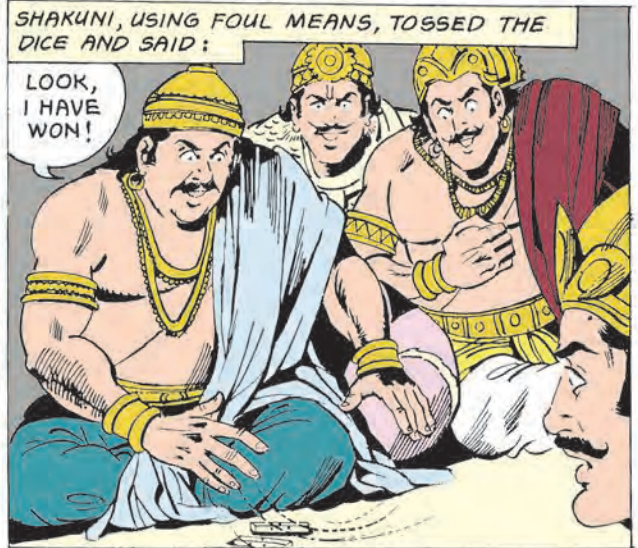
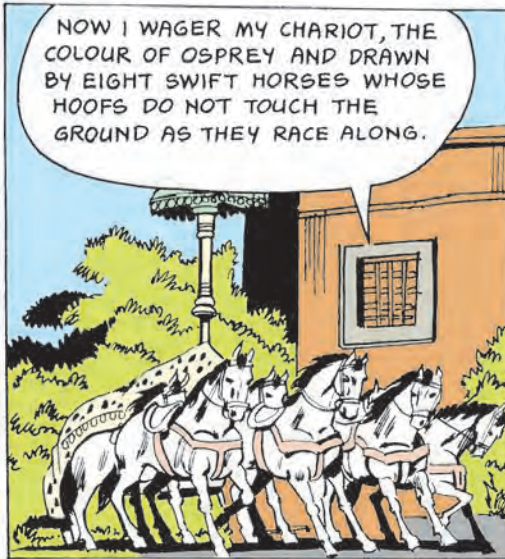


THE NEXT MOMENT, SHAKUNI TOSSED THE DICE AND SAID —

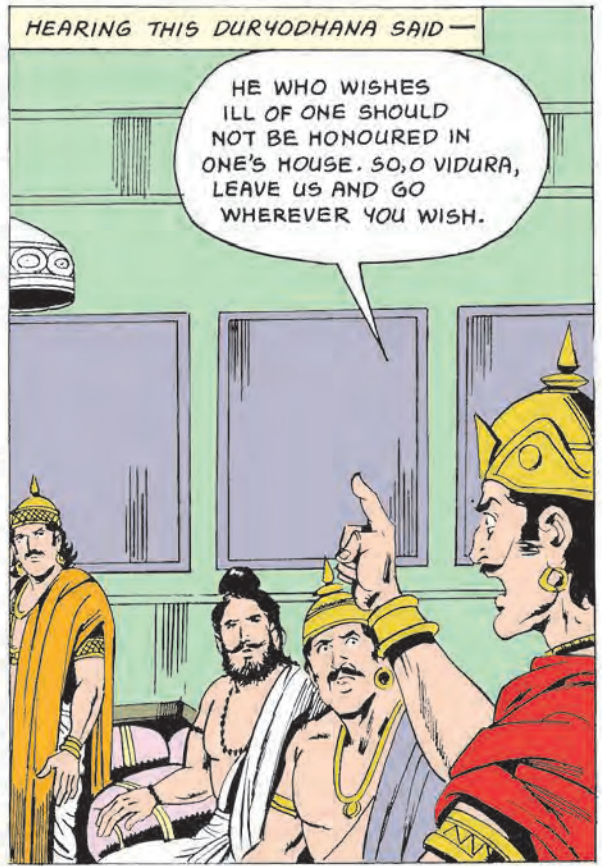
LO, I HAVE WON!













HAVING LOST ALL HIS WEALTH,  
YUDHISHTHIRA SAID —

NOW I WAGER  
THE YOUTHFUL,  
MIGHTY ARMED  
NAKULA WHO IS OF  
DARK COMPLEXION,  
RED EYES AND  
LEONINE SHOUL-  
DERS.

NOW I STAKE  
SAHADEVA, WHO  
RULES ACCORDING  
TO DHARMA AND  
IS KNOWN AS  
LEARNED ALL  
OVER THE WORLD.

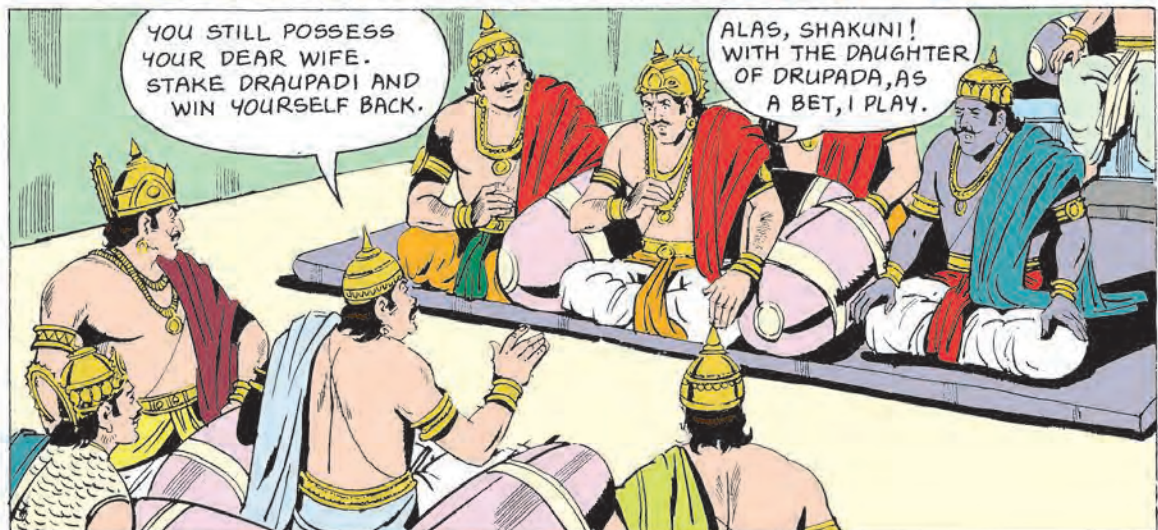
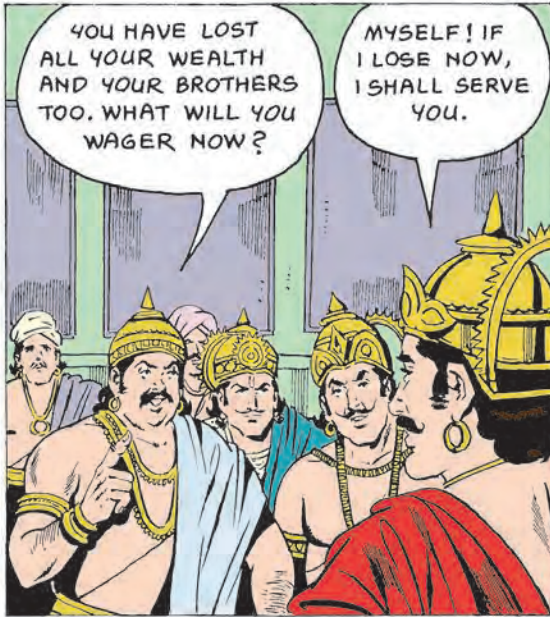


NOW I  
WAGER THE  
MIGHTY BHEEMA  
WHO IS  
SUPREME IN  
MACE-COMBAT.

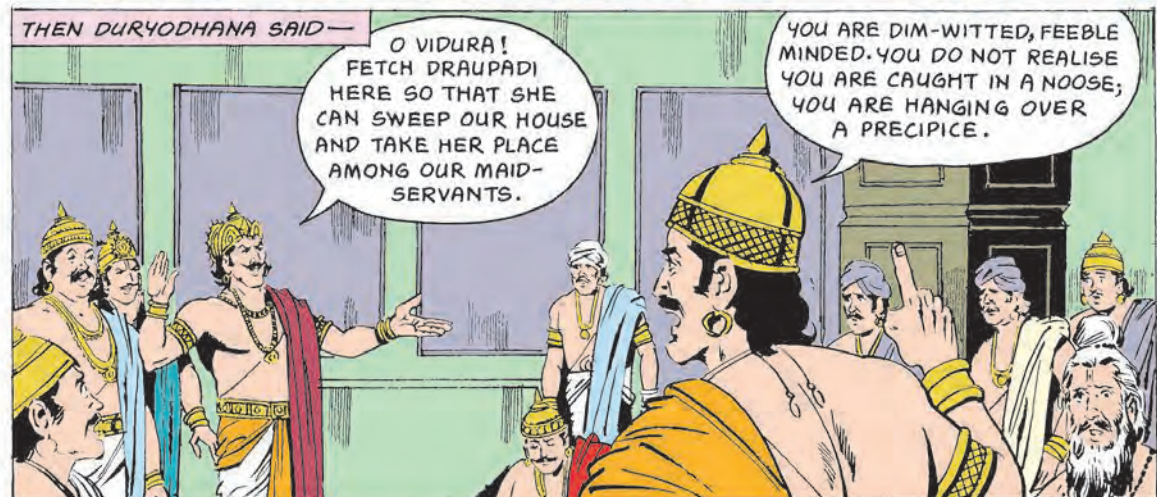
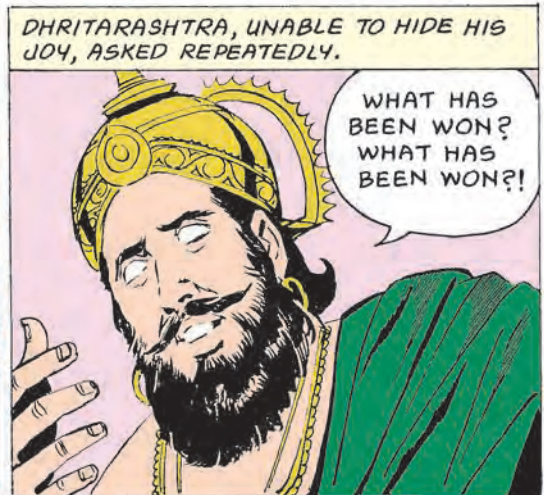
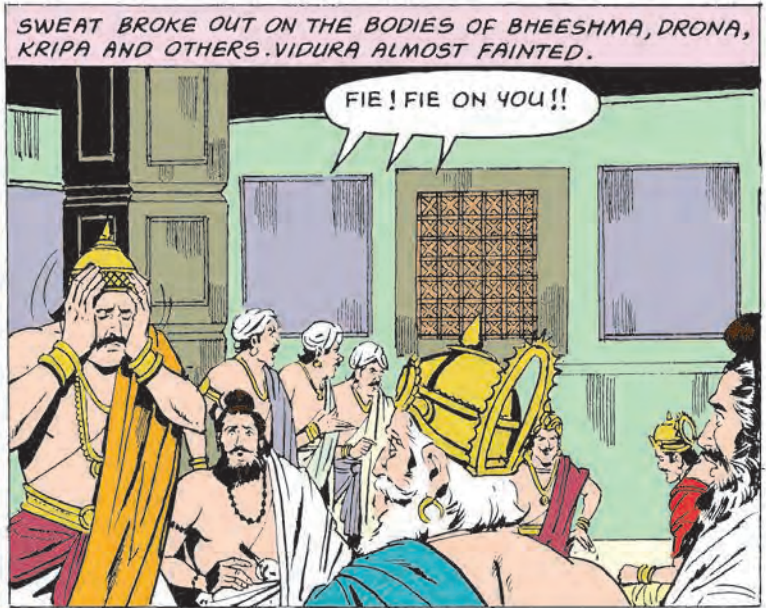
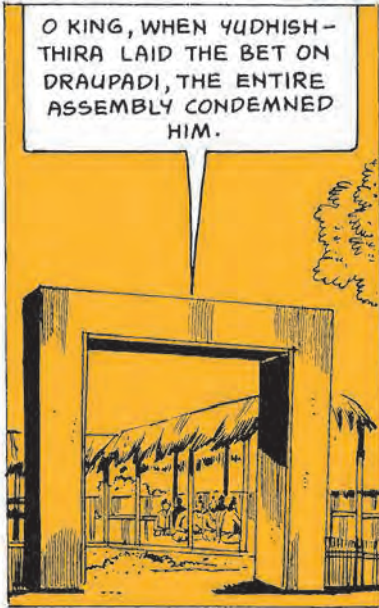
THIS ARJUNA IS  
LIKE A SHIP AND  
CARRIES US ACROSS THE  
OCEAN OF WAR. HE IS A  
CONQUEROR OF HIS FOES  
AND A MIGHTY PRINCE.  
WITH THAT ARJUNA, THE  
ONE WARRIOR IN THE  
WORLD WHO DOES NOT  
DESERVE THIS,  
I GAMBLE.



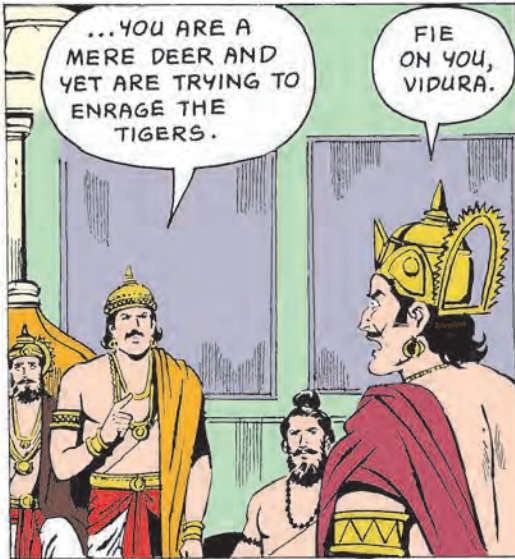




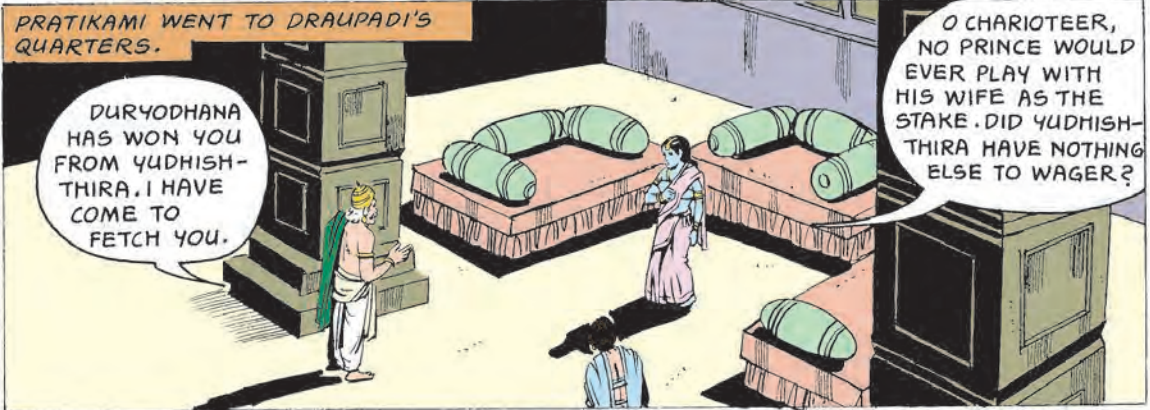








PRATIKAMI WENT TO DRAUPADI'S QUARTERS.





TO CARRY OUT THE COMMAND OF HIS BROTHER DUHSHASANA ENTERED THE QUARTERS OF THE PANDAVAS, AND SPOKE TO DRAUPADI THUS —



O PANCHALI, THE KAURAVAS HAVE WON YOU RIGHTEOUSLY. COME AND SERVE US.

ADDRESSED THUS BY DUHSHASANA, DRAUPADI ROSE AND WIPING HER TEARS PROCEEDED TOWARDS THE QUARTERS OF THE KAURAVA WOMEN.



ROARING WITH ANGER, DUHSHASANA RUSHED AND CAUGHT HER BY THE HAIR.



DRAUGED ALONG, HER SLENDER BODY BENT, SHE SAID IN A LOW TONE:

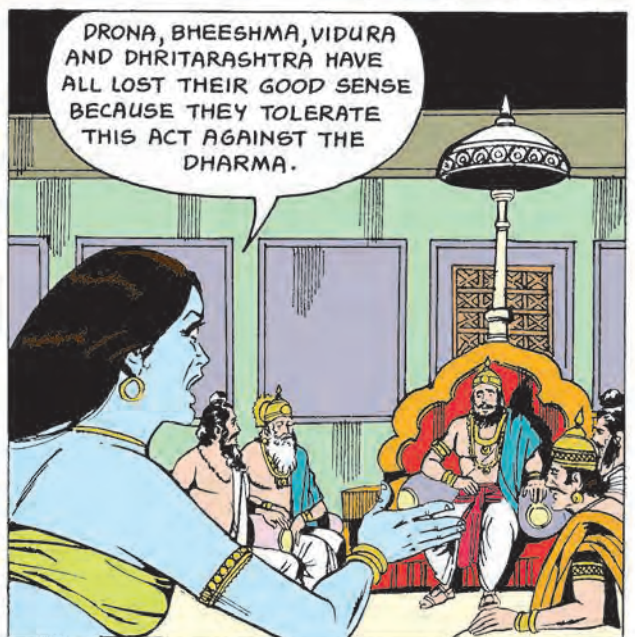


O WICKED WRETCH, I AM WEARING ONLY ONE GARMENT. I AM UNWELL. I AM NOT FIT TO GO TO THE ASSEMBLY.





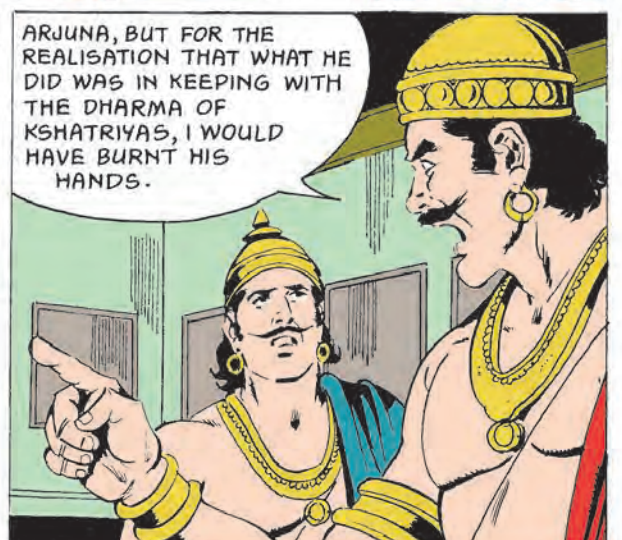
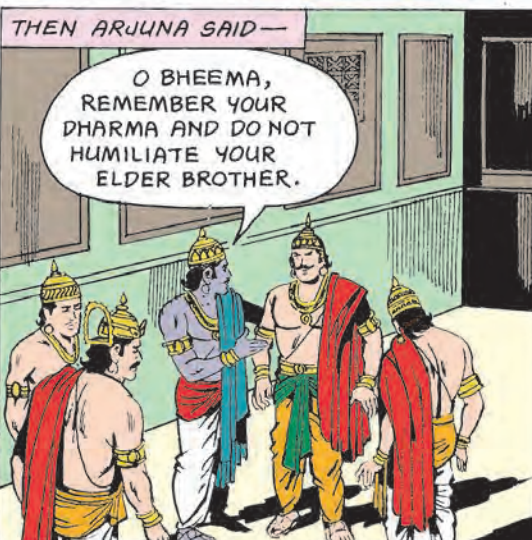
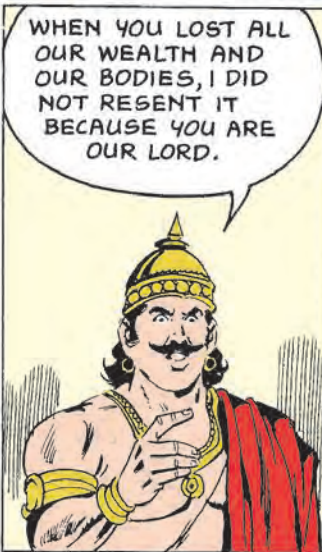
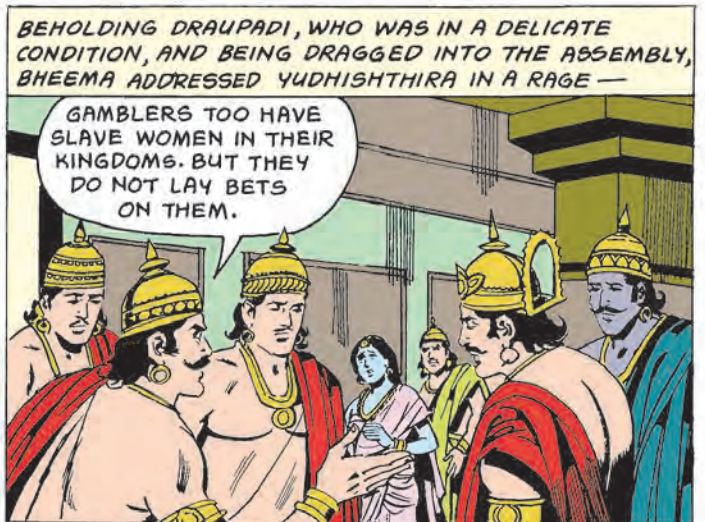
WITH DISHEVELLED HAIR AND HALF-FALLEN GARMENT AND TOSSED ABOUT BY DUHSHASANA, DRAUPADI SAID ANGRILY.



THEN BHEESHMA SAID —

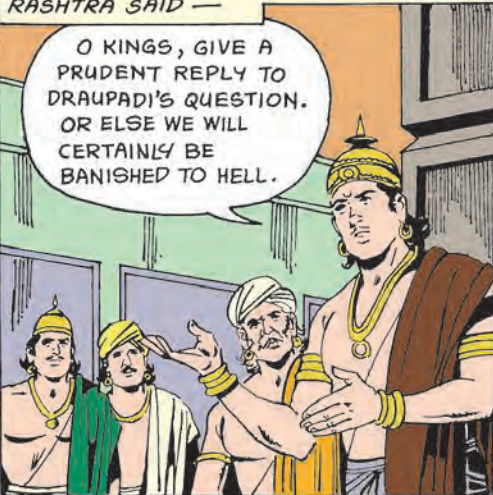




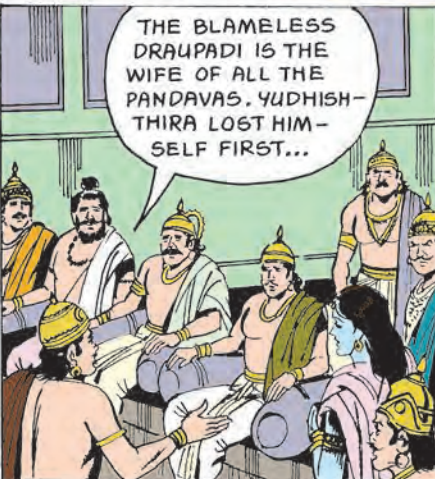
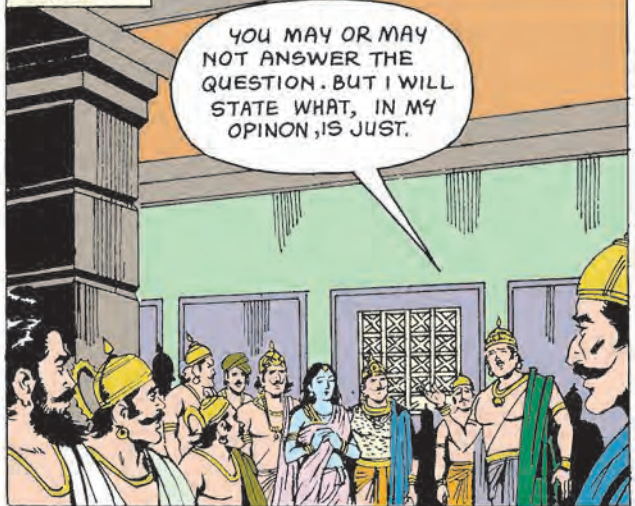




THEN BEHOLDING THE PANDAVAS IN TORMENT AND DRAUPADI HAVING BEEN DRAGGED, VIKARNA, A SON OF DHRITA-RASHTRA SAID —



VIKARNA URGED THE KINGS REPEATEDLY. BUT WHEN NONE OF THEM UTTERED A WORD, HE SAID —





WHEN THAT NOISE DIED DOWN, KARNA  
ADDRESSED DUHSHASANA —

VIKARNA TALKS  
LIKE A WISE MAN  
BUT HE IS A FOOL.  
DUHSHASANA, DISROBE  
THE PANDAVAS AND  
DRAUPADI.



HEARING THESE WORDS,  
THE PANDAVAS THEMSELVES  
REMOVED THEIR CLOTHES.  
AND DUHSHASANA STARTED  
TO DISROBE DRAUPADI.

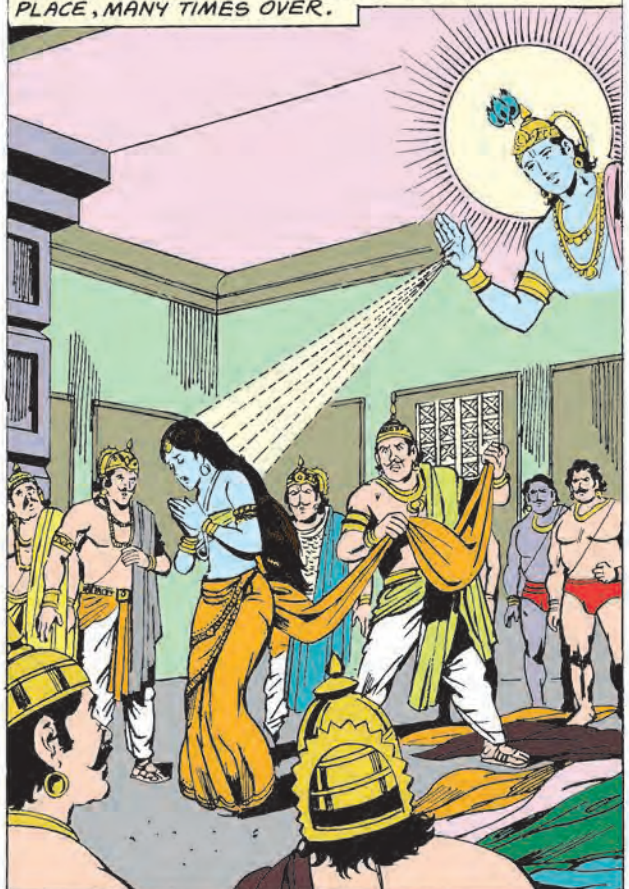


WHEN HER GARMENT WAS BEING PULLED,  
DRAUPADI MEDITATED ON KRISHNA —

O GOVINDA WHO  
DWELLS IN DWARAKA,  
O GREAT YOGI, O SOUL OF  
THE UNIVERSE, O  
CREATOR OF ALL, SAVE  
ME FROM THIS  
DISGRACE.



AS DUHSHASANA PULLED OFF DRAUPADI'S  
GARMENT, ANOTHER GARMENT APPEARED IN ITS  
PLACE, MANY TIMES OVER.





SOON, THE GARMENTS OF VARIOUS HUES  
REMOVED FROM THE BODY OF DRAUPADI FORMED  
A LARGE HEAP ON THE FLOOR.





HAVING FAILED IN DISROBING DRAUPADI, DUHSHASANA SAT DOWN TIRED AND FILLED WITH SHAME. THEN BHEEMA TOOK THIS TERRIBLE VOW —

MAY I NOT ATTAIN THE HEAVENLY ABODE WHERE MY FOREFATHERS DWELL, IF I DO NOT TEAR DUHSHASANA'S CHEST AND DRINK HIS BLOOD.



IMPELLED BY DESIRE AND TO SPITE BHEEMA, DURYODHANA GESTURED LEWDLY TO DRAUPADI, AGAIN AND AGAIN ASKING HER TO SIT ON HIS THIGHS.



HIS EYES BLOODSHOT WITH ANGER ON BEHOLDING THIS, BHEEMA TOOK ANOTHER VOW —

IF I DO NOT BREAK YOUR THIGH IN A GREAT WAR, THEN MAY I NOT ATTAIN THE WORLD\* OF MY ANCESTORS.



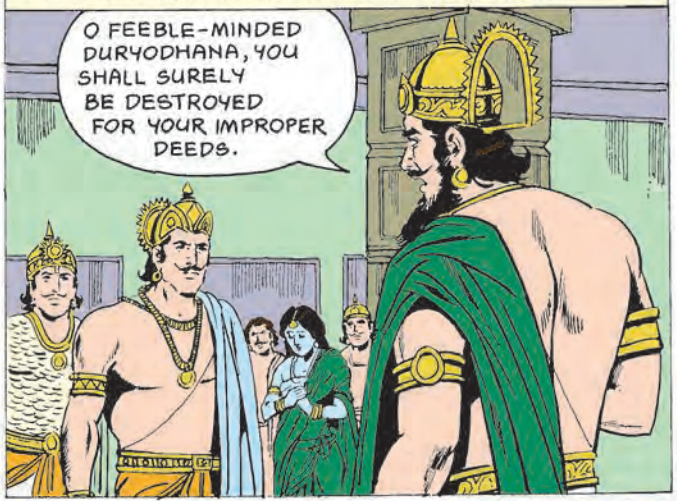


AT THAT MOMENT A JACKAL HOWLED IN DHRTIRASHTRA'S YAJNA HALL AND ASSES AND CARRION BIRDS ANSWERED IT FROM ALL SIDES. DISTURBED BY THE NOISE GANDHARI AND VIDURA CONFERRED WITH DHRTIRASHTRA.



THEN DHRTIRASHTRA SAID TO DURYODHANA —

O FEEBLE-MINDED DURYODHANA, YOU SHALL SURELY BE DESTROYED FOR YOUR IMPROPER DEEDS.



AND THEN DHRTIRASHTRA ADDRESSED DRAUPADI.

YOU ARE MY NOBLE DAUGHTER-IN-LAW. ASK OF ME ANY BOON YOU DESIRE.

MAY YUDHISHTHIRA BE FREE.

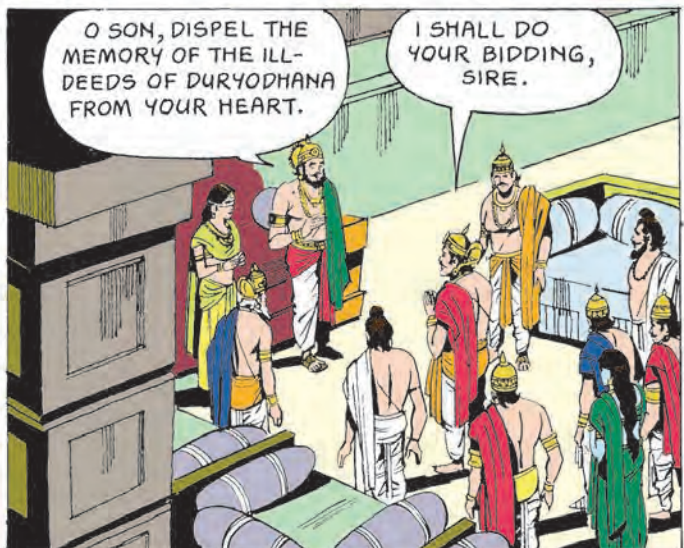
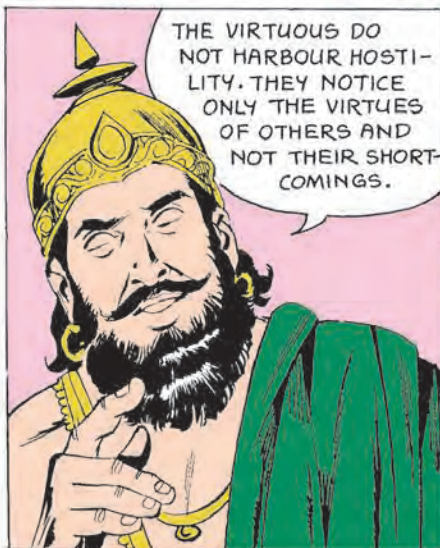
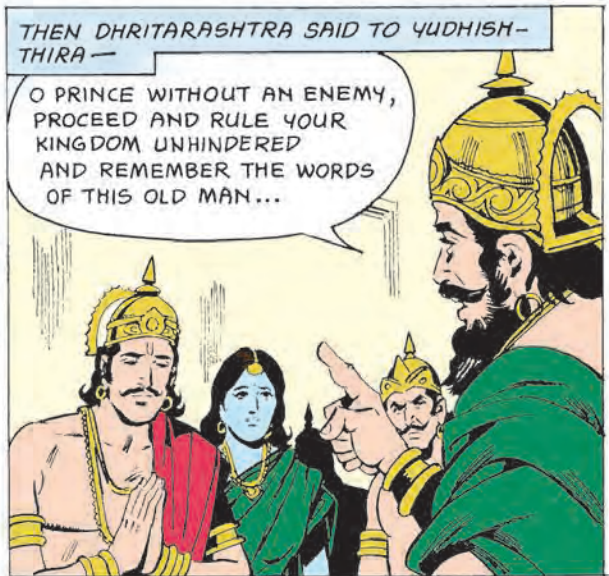
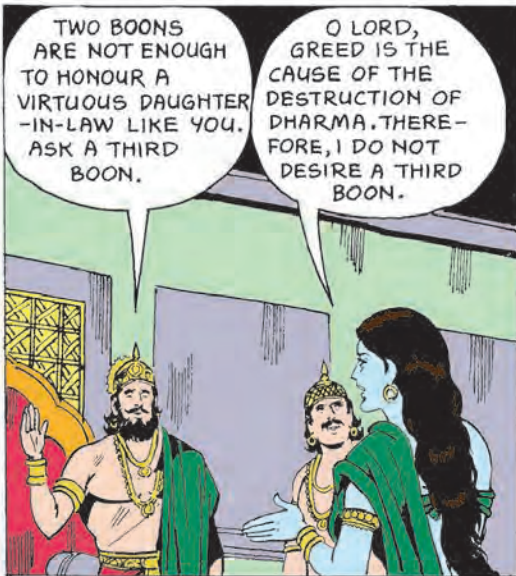


SO BE IT. O CHASTE WOMAN, YOU DESERVE A SECOND BOON.

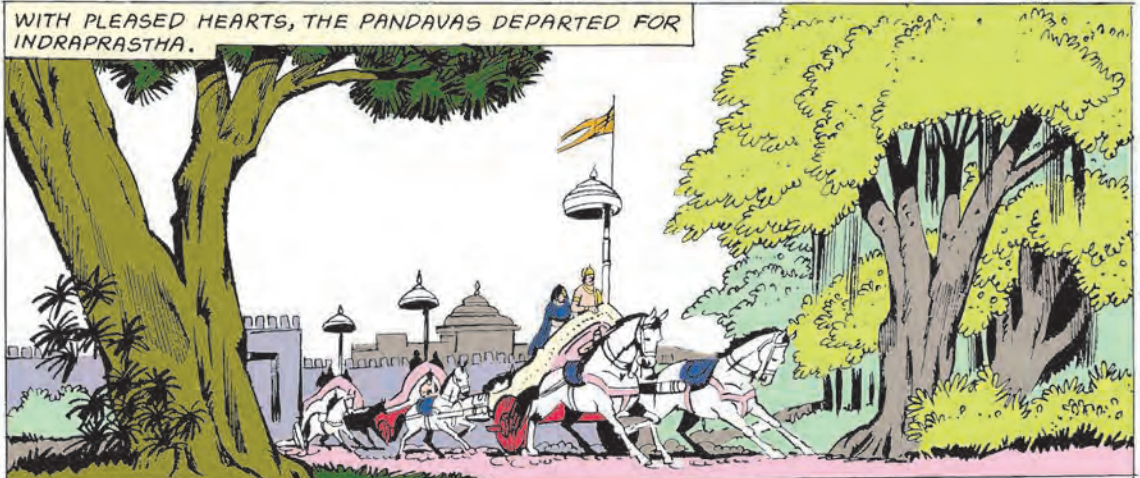
THEN GRANT FREEDOM TO BHEEMA, ARJUNA, NAKULA AND SAHADEVA AND GIVE THEM BACK THEIR CHARIOTS AND WEAPONS.







WITH PLEASED HEARTS, THE PANDAVAS DEPARTED FOR INDRAPRASTHA.





WHEN THE PANDAVAS LEFT, DUHSHASANA, AFFLICTED WITH GRIEF, WENT TO HIS BROTHER DURYODHANA AND SAID —

WHATEVER WE GAINED WITH GREAT EFFORT HAS ALL BEEN LOST BY THE OLD MAN.



THEN DURYODHANA WENT TO DHRTIRASHTRA AND SAID —

THE PANDAVAS HAVE BEEN SEVERELY HUMILIATED BY US. THEY WILL NEVER FORGET HOW WE MOLESTED DRAUPADI.



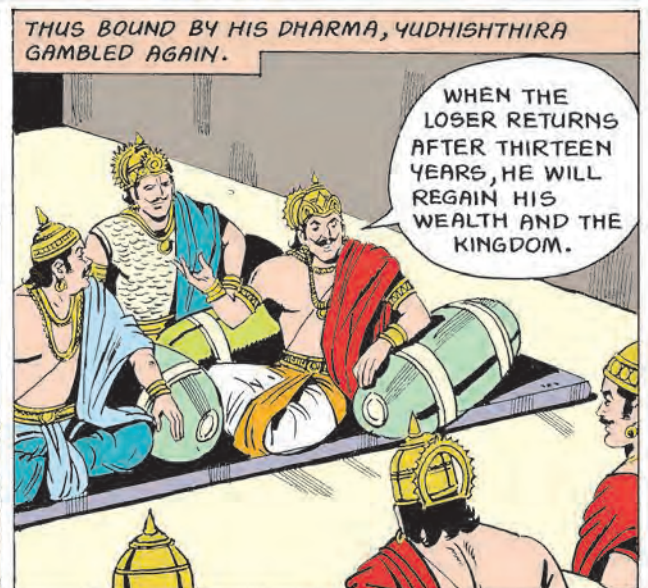
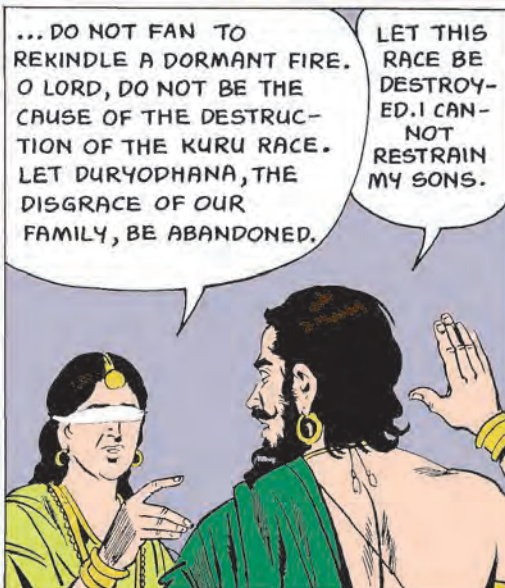
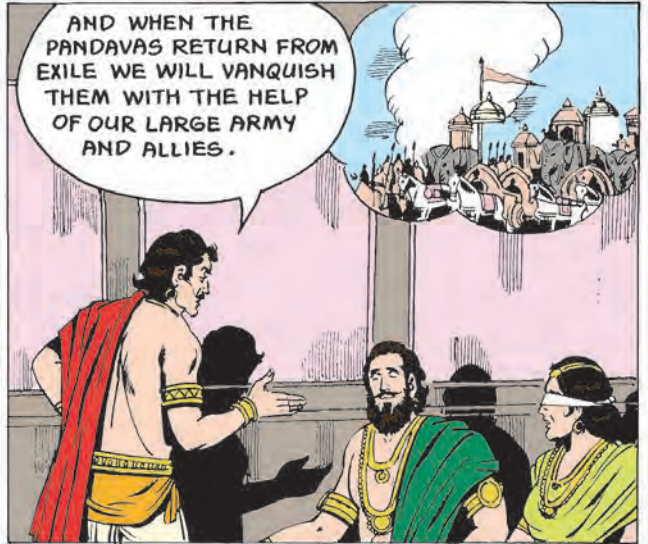
WE WON THE GAME OF DICE BY TRICKERY IN GAMBLING AGAINST THE PANDAVAS. WE COULD NEVER WIN AGAINST THEM BY ANY OTHER MEANS. LET US INVITE THEM ONCE AGAIN TO A GAME OF DICE. WHOEVER LOSES NOW WILL BE BANISHED TO THE FOREST FOR TWELVE YEARS...



...AND WILL HAVE TO LIVE THE THIRTEENTH YEAR INCOGNITO. IF DISCOVERED DURING THIS YEAR THE LOSERS WILL LIVE IN THE FOREST FOR ANOTHER TWELVE YEARS.









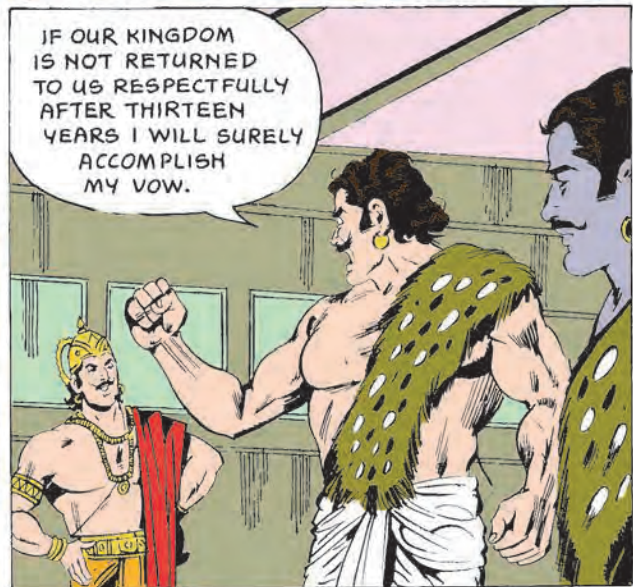
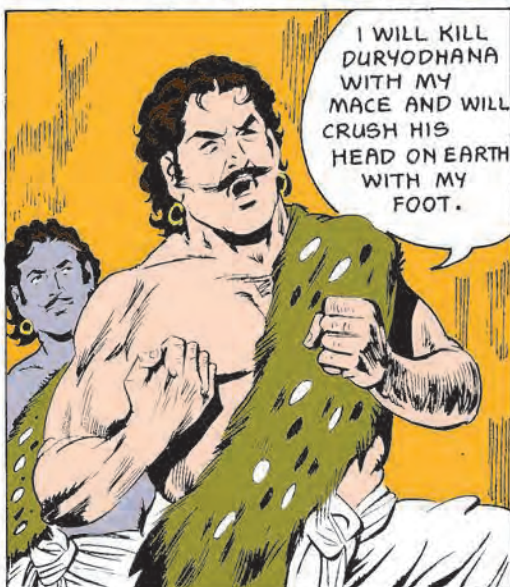
WHEN YUDHISHTHIRA ACCEPTED THE TERMS, SHAKUNI PLAYED THE DICE AND SAID.



DUHSHASANA DANCED FOR JOY WHEN HE SAW THE VANQUISHED PANDAVAS WEARING DEERSKINS AS UPPER GARMENTS.



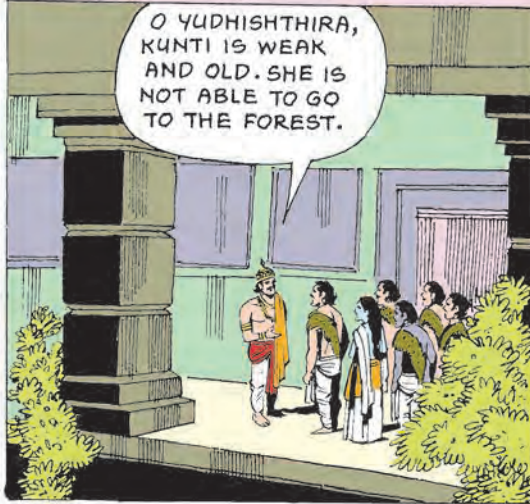
DURYODHANA IMITATED THE LEONINE WALK OF BHEEMA TO MOCK HIM. THEN BHEEMA SAID —





YUDHISHTHIRA SOUGHT LEAVE OF DRONA, KRIPA, VIDURA, DHRTIRASHTRA AND OTHERS. THEN VIDURA SAID —

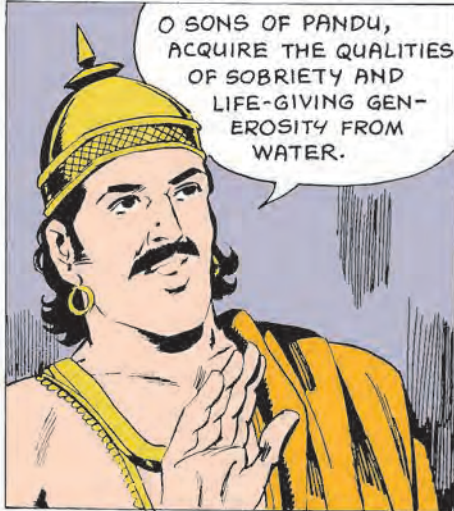
O YUDHISHTHIRA, KUNTI IS WEAK AND OLD. SHE IS NOT ABLE TO GO TO THE FOREST.



SHE WILL STAY IN MY HOUSE AND WILL BE ACCORD-ED THE RESPECT DUE TO HER.

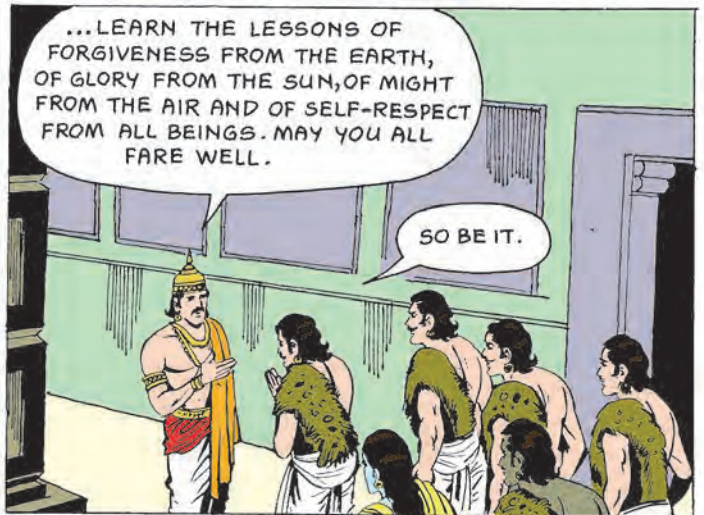


O SONS OF PANDU, ACQUIRE THE QUALITIES OF SOBRIETY AND LIFE-GIVING GEN-EROSITY FROM WATER.

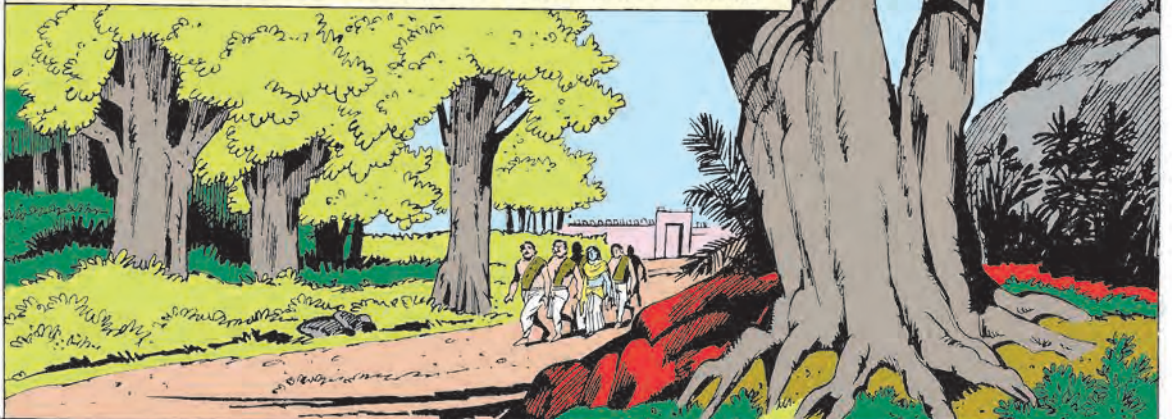


...LEARN THE LESSONS OF FORGIVENESS FROM THE EARTH, OF GLORY FROM THE SUN, OF MIGHT FROM THE AIR AND OF SELF-RESPECT FROM ALL BEINGS. MAY YOU ALL FARE WELL.

SO BE IT.

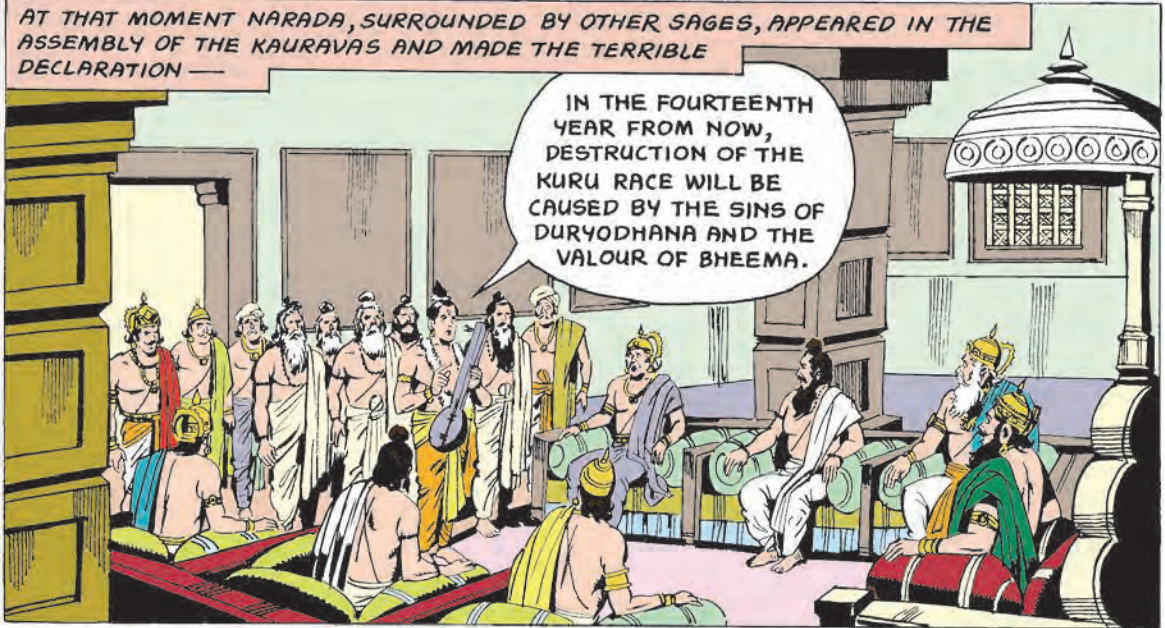


THE PANDAVAS THEN LEFT FOR THE FOREST. DRAUPADI, IN TEARS AND WITH HER HAIR UNBRAIDED ACCOMPANIED THEM.





AT THAT MOMENT NARADA, SURROUNDED BY OTHER SAGES, APPEARED IN THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KAURAVAS AND MADE THE TERRIBLE DECLARATION —

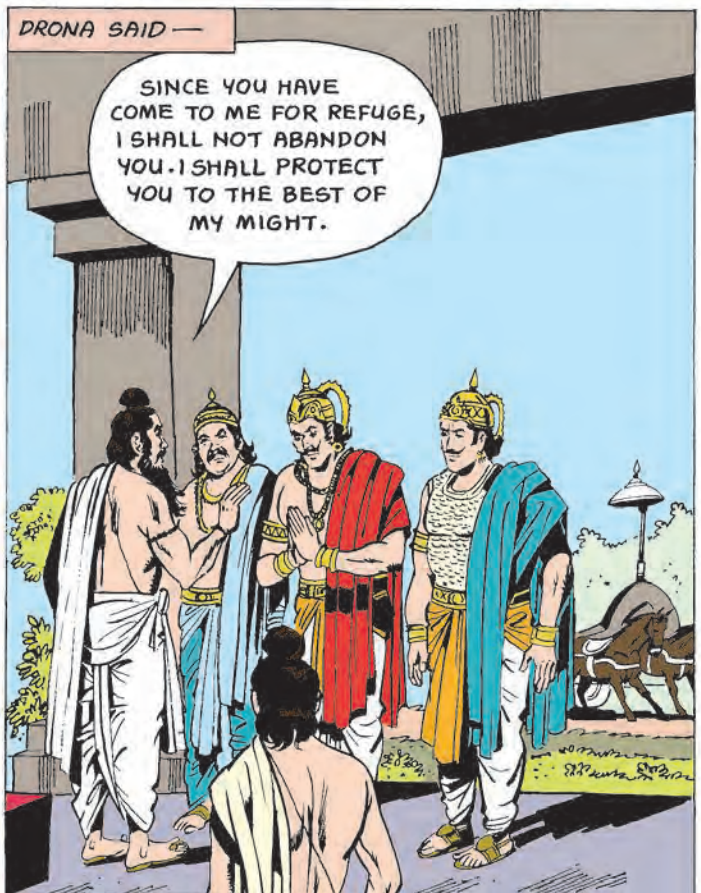


SAYING THIS, NARADA VANISHED. THEN DURYODHANA, KARNA AND SHAKUNI ACKNOWLEDGED DRONA AS THEIR ISLAND OF REFUGE IN THE SEA OF THEIR FEAR AND DEDICATED THEIR KINGDOM TO HIM.



DRONA SAID —

SINCE YOU HAVE COME TO ME FOR REFUGE, I SHALL NOT ABANDON YOU. I SHALL PROTECT YOU TO THE BEST OF MY MIGHT.



THUS ENDS THE EIGHTEENTH SESSION OF OUR RENDERING OF VAISHAMPAYANA'S RECITAL OF VYASA'S ITIHASA, THE MAHABHARATA.

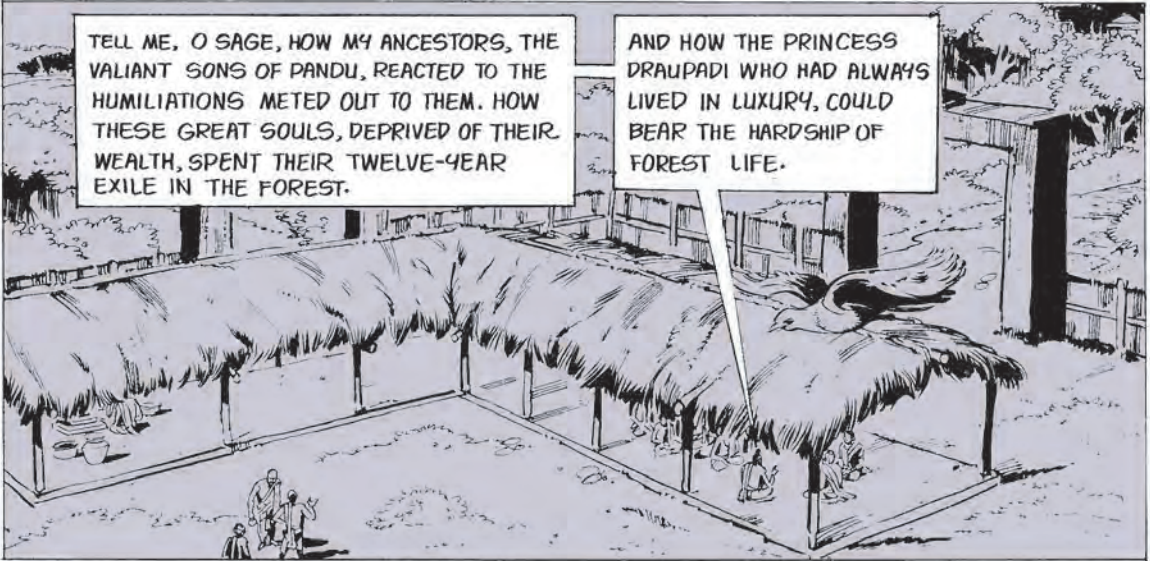


# Mahabharata – 19

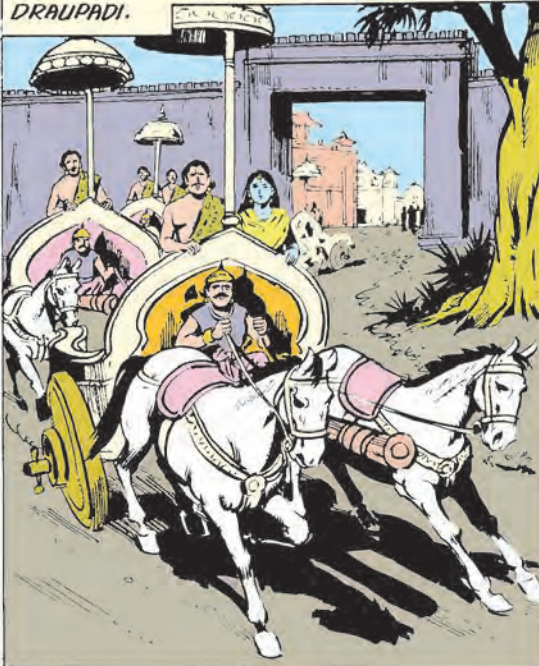
## THE PANDAVAS IN THE FOREST

TELL ME, O SAGE, HOW MY ANCESTORS, THE VALIANT SONS OF PANDU, REACTED TO THE HUMILIATIONS METED OUT TO THEM. HOW THESE GREAT SOULS, DEPRIVED OF THEIR WEALTH, SPENT THEIR TWELVE-YEAR EXILE IN THE FOREST.

AND HOW THE PRINCESS DRAUPADI WHO HAD ALWAYS LIVED IN LUXURY, COULD BEAR THE HARDSHIP OF FOREST LIFE.



"HAVING BEEN DEFEATED BY THE WICKED SONS OF DHRTARASHTRA IN THE DECEITFUL GAME OF DICE, THE PANDAVAS, WITH THEIR ANGER EVOKED, PICKED UP THEIR WEAPONS AND CAME OUT OF HASTINAPURA, ACCOMPANIED BY DRAUPADI.



"THEY PROCEEDED NORTHWARDS AND FOURTEEN OF THEIR ATTENDANTS, ALONG WITH THEIR WIVES FOLLOWED THEM.





"ON HEARING THE FATE OF THE PANDAVAS, THE CITIZENS OF HASTINAPURA CAME OUT OF THEIR HOMES. IN THEIR SORROW AND ANGER, THEY DID NOT SPARE IN THEIR CRITICISM EVEN BHEESHMA, VIDURA, DRONA AND KRPA.

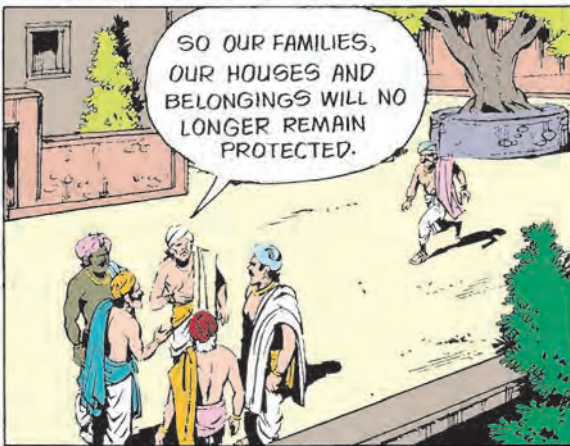


"AND THEY SAID TO ONE ANOTHER :

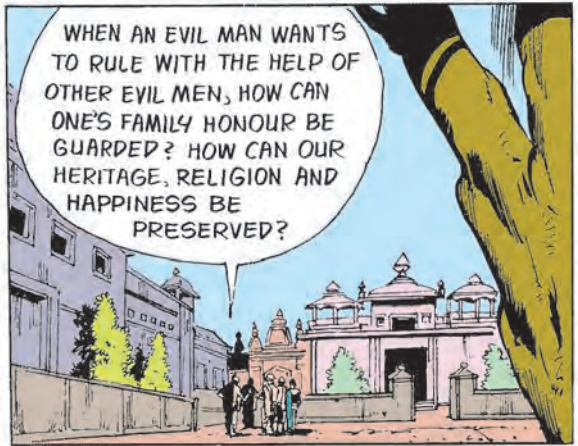
THE SINNER DURYODHANA, AIDED BY SHAKUNI AND WITH THE APPROVAL OF KARNA AND DUHSHASANA, WANTS TO RULE OVER US.



SO OUR FAMILIES, OUR HOUSES AND BELONGINGS WILL NO LONGER REMAIN PROTECTED.



WHEN AN EVIL MAN WANTS TO RULE WITH THE HELP OF OTHER EVIL MEN, HOW CAN ONE'S FAMILY HONOUR BE GUARDED? HOW CAN OUR HERITAGE, RELIGION AND HAPPINESS BE PRESERVED?



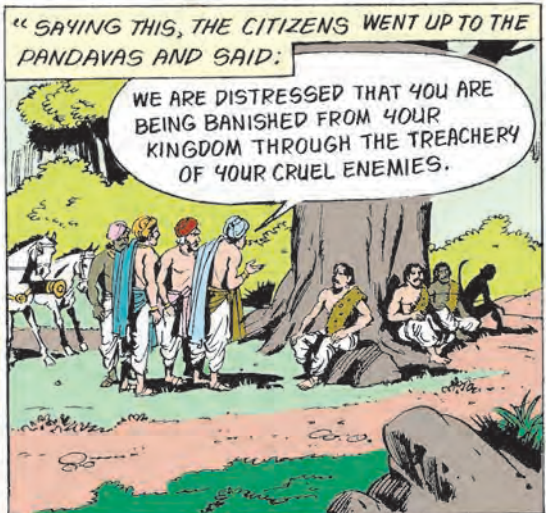
IT IS CERTAIN THAT UNDER DURYODHANA'S RULE, THE WHOLE WORLD WILL COME TO A SORRY END.

SO LET US ACCOMPANY THE KIND-HEARTED, RIGHTEOUS AND VALOROUS PANDAVAS WHEREVER THEY GO.

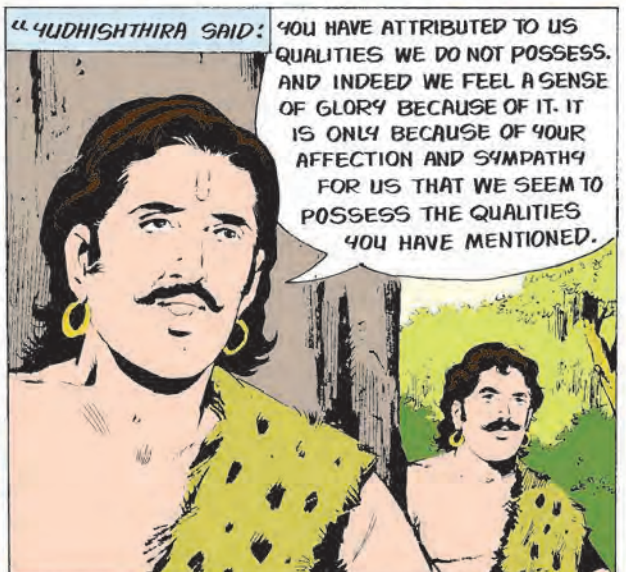
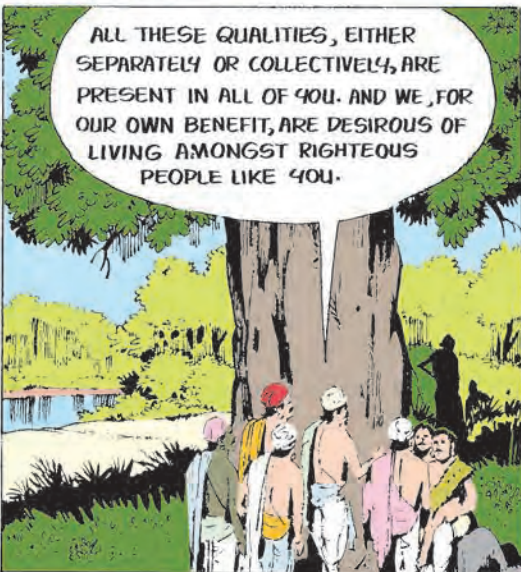
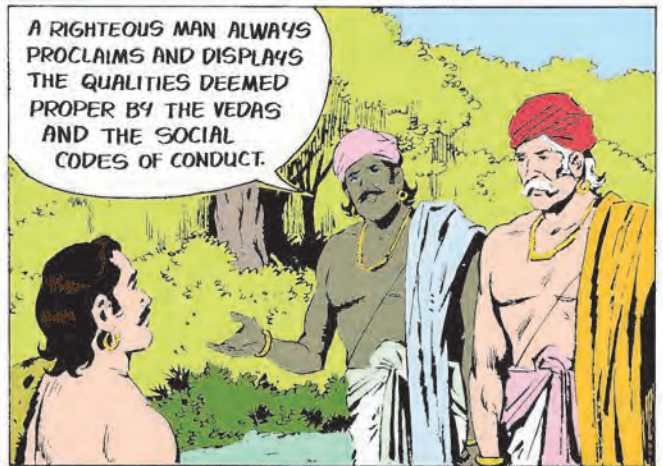
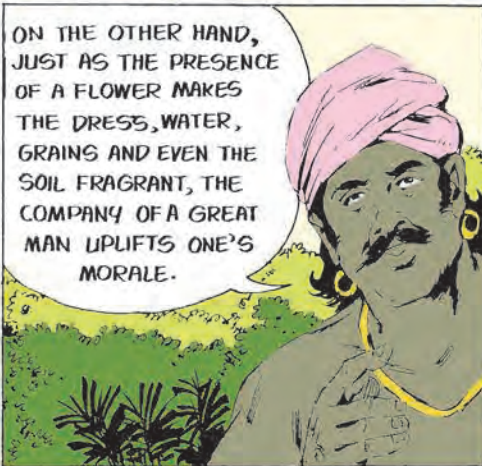
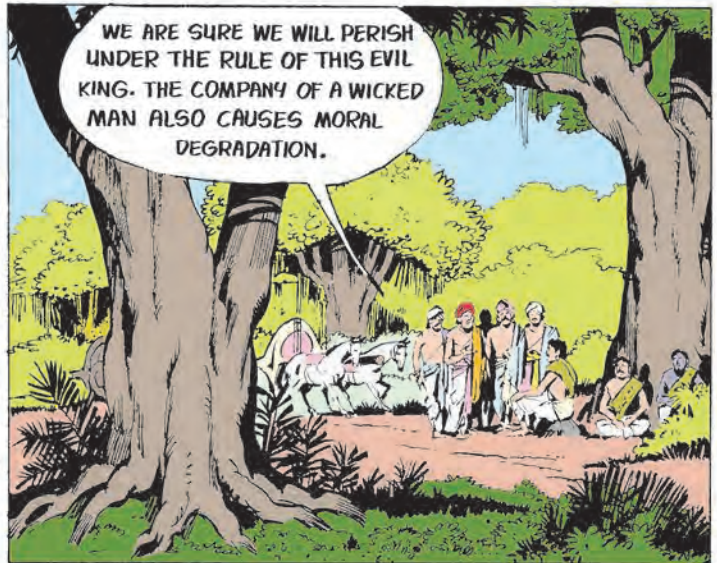
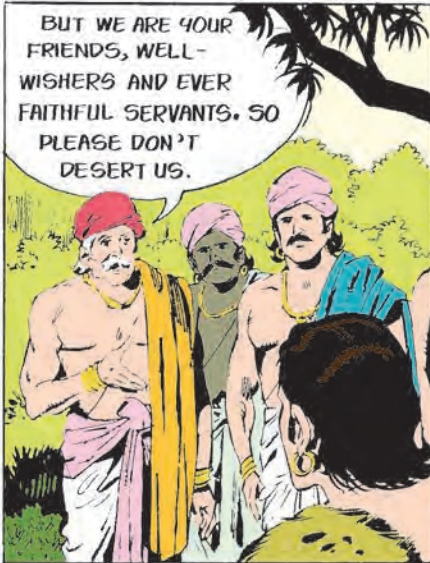


" SAYING THIS, THE CITIZENS WENT UP TO THE PANDAVAS AND SAID :

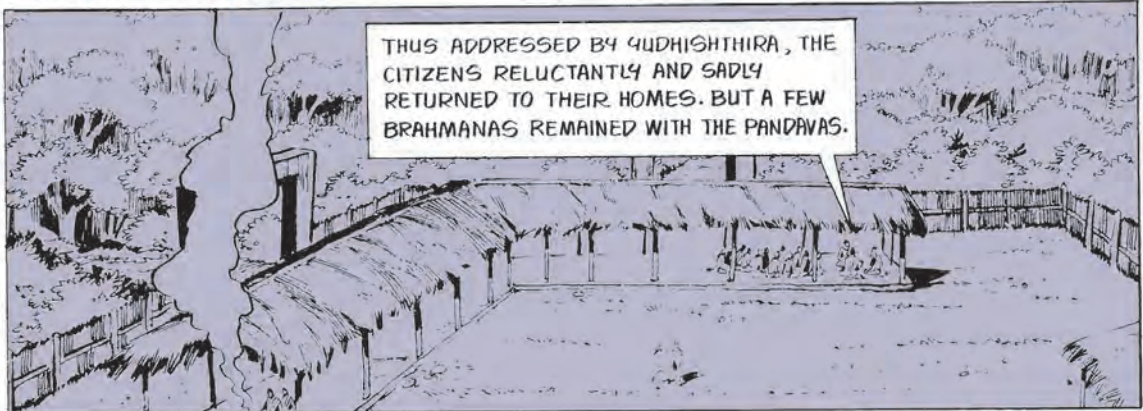
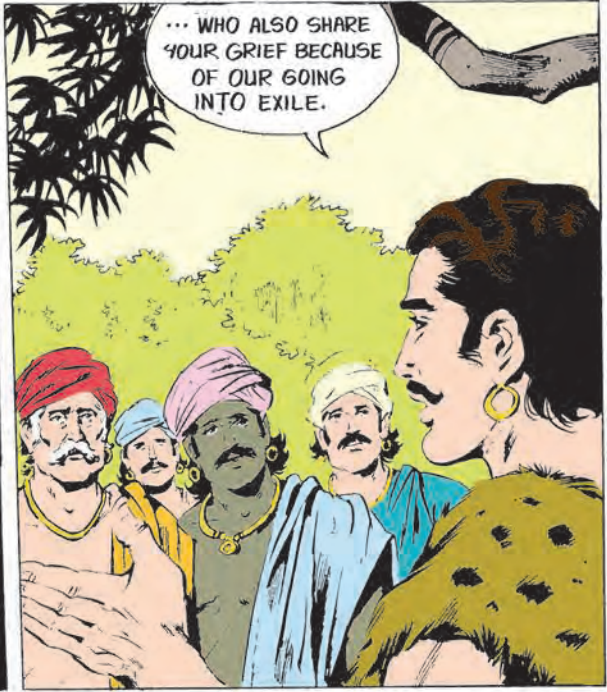
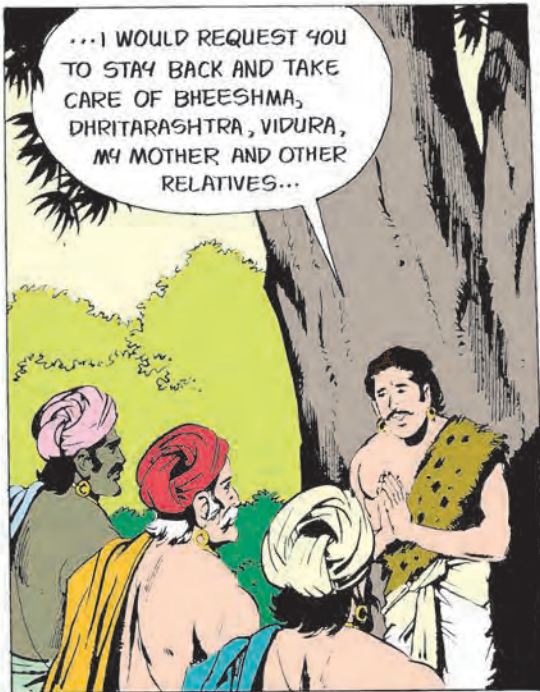
WE ARE DISTRESSED THAT YOU ARE BEING BANISHED FROM YOUR KINGDOM THROUGH THE TREACHERY OF YOUR CRUEL ENEMIES.











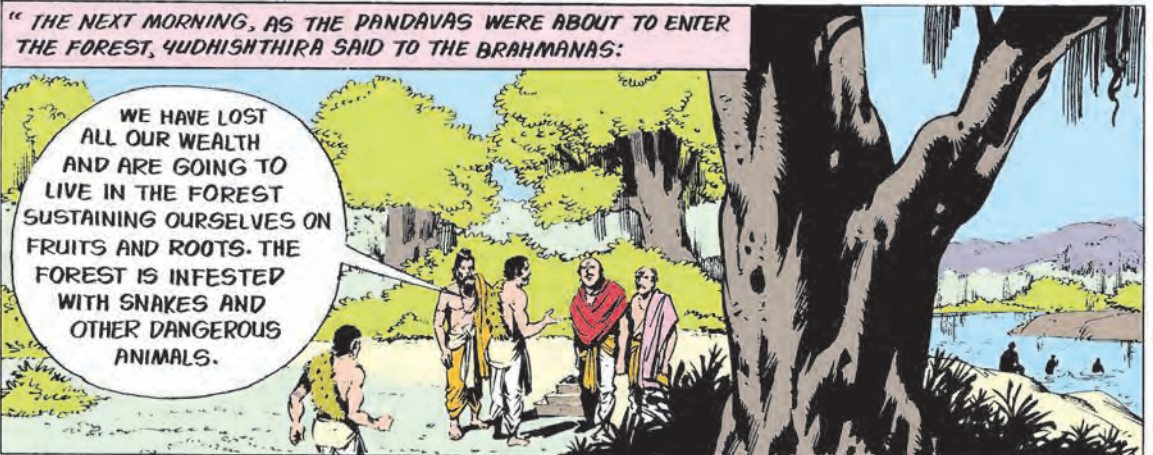


"AT NIGHTFALL, THE BRAHMANAS LIT A SACRIFICIAL FIRE AND ENTERTAINED YUDHISHTHIRA BY CHANTING VEDIC HYMNS AND SAYING WORDS OF ASSURANCE."

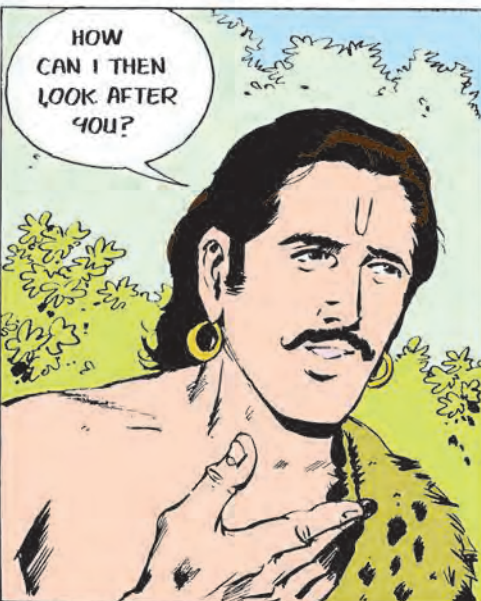


"THE NEXT MORNING, AS THE PANDAVAS WERE ABOUT TO ENTER THE FOREST, YUDHISHTHIRA SAID TO THE BRAHMANAS:

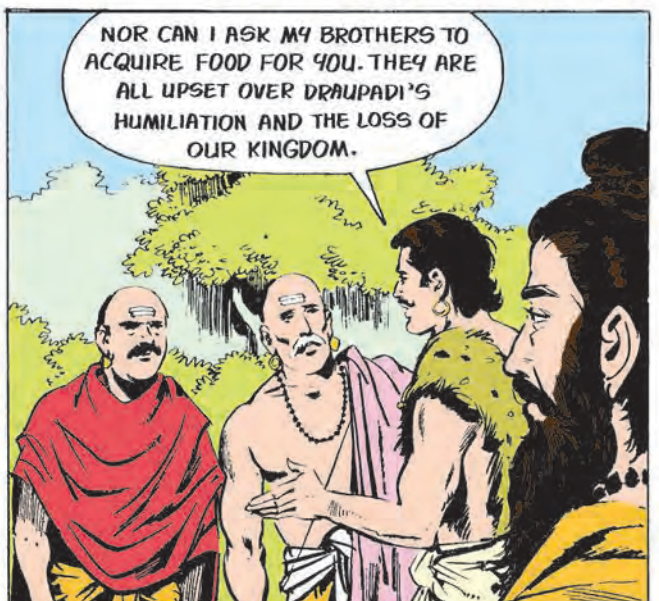
WE HAVE LOST ALL OUR WEALTH AND ARE GOING TO LIVE IN THE FOREST SUSTAINING OURSELVES ON FRUITS AND ROOTS. THE FOREST IS INFESTED WITH SNAKES AND OTHER DANGEROUS ANIMALS.



HOW CAN I THEN LOOK AFTER YOU?



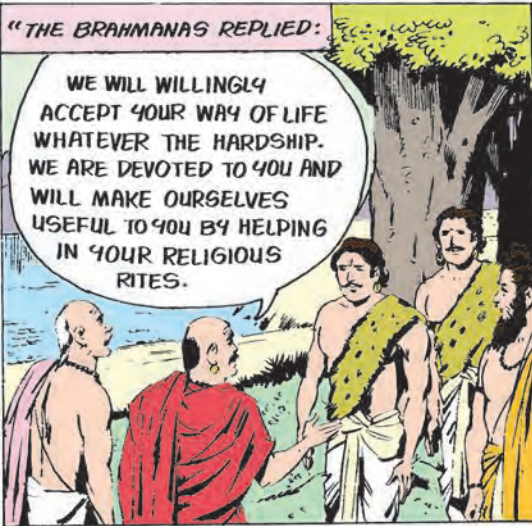
NOR CAN I ASK MY BROTHERS TO ACQUIRE FOOD FOR YOU. THEY ARE ALL UPSET OVER DRAUPADI'S HUMILIATION AND THE LOSS OF OUR KINGDOM.





"THE BRAHMANAS REPLIED:

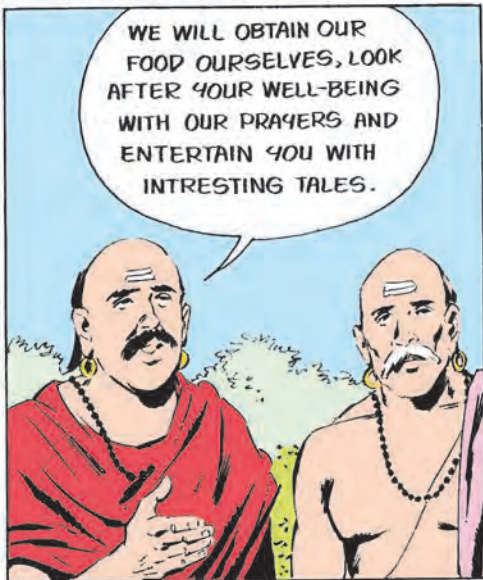
WE WILL WILLINGLY  
ACCEPT YOUR WAY OF LIFE  
WHATEVER THE HARDSHIP.  
WE ARE DEVOTED TO YOU AND  
WILL MAKE OURSELVES  
USEFUL TO YOU BY HELPING  
IN YOUR RELIGIOUS  
RITES.



DO NOT TURN US AWAY LIKE THIS.  
EVEN GOD FAVOURS HIS DEVOTEES,  
ESPECIALLY THE RIGHTeous  
BRAHMANAS.

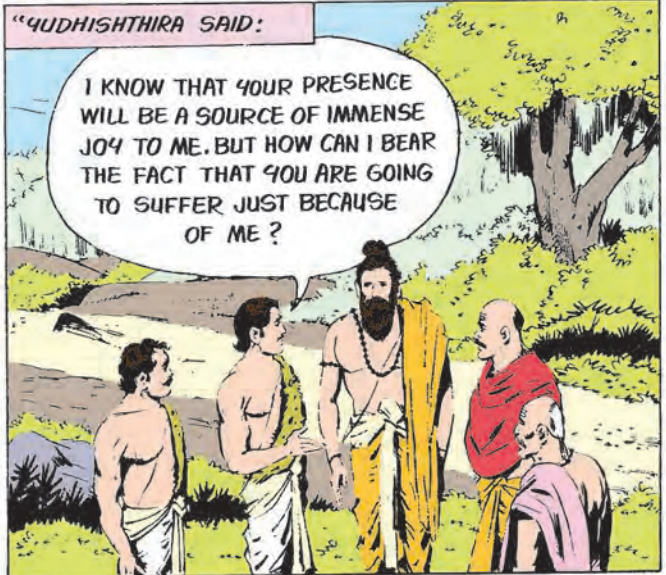


WE WILL OBTAIN OUR  
FOOD OURSELVES, LOOK  
AFTER YOUR WELL-BEING  
WITH OUR PRAYERS AND  
ENTERTAIN YOU WITH  
INTERESTING TALES.



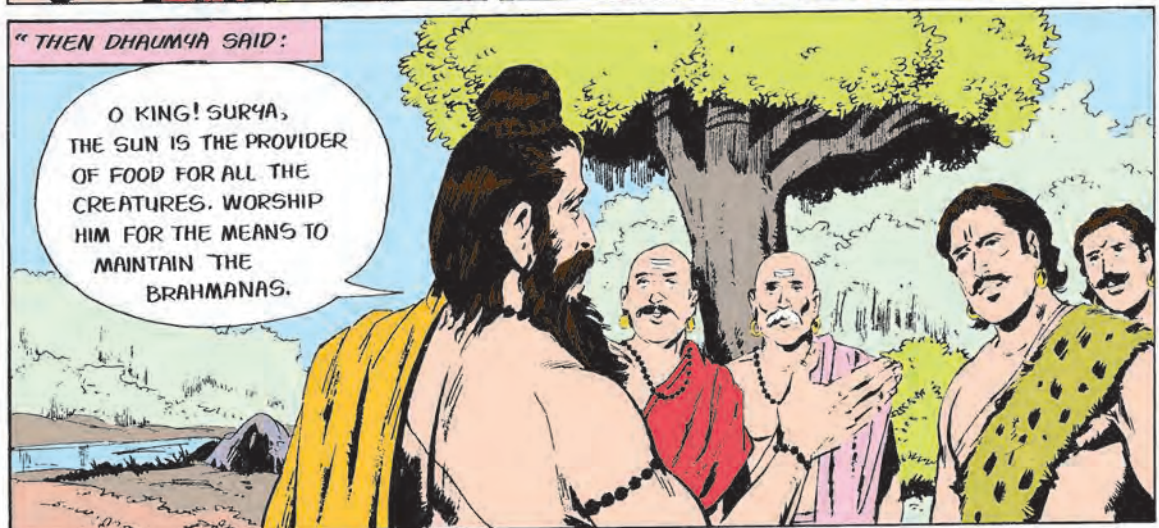
"YUDHISHTHIRA SAID:

I KNOW THAT YOUR PRESENCE  
WILL BE A SOURCE OF IMMENSE  
JOY TO ME. BUT HOW CAN I BEAR  
THE FACT THAT YOU ARE GOING  
TO SUFFER JUST BECAUSE  
OF ME?



"THEN DHAUMYA SAID:

O KING! SURYA,  
THE SUN IS THE PROVIDER  
OF FOOD FOR ALL THE  
CREATURES. WORSHIP  
HIM FOR THE MEANS TO  
MAINTAIN THE  
BRAHMANAS.

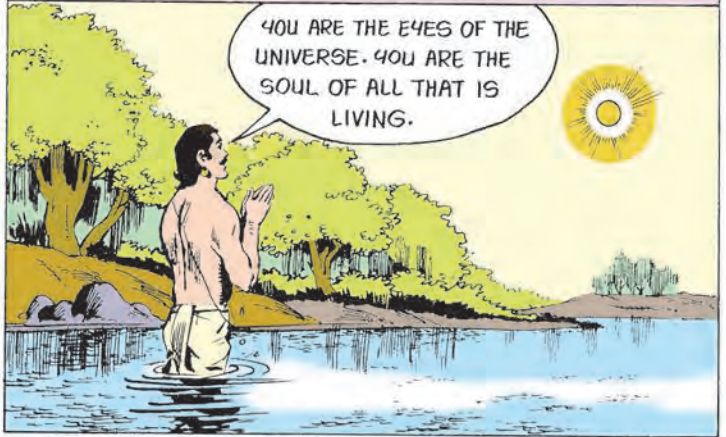




THUS ADVISED BY DHAUMYA,  
O MONARCH, YUDHISHTHIRA  
STARTED HIS AUSTERITIES  
TO PROPITIATE SURYA.

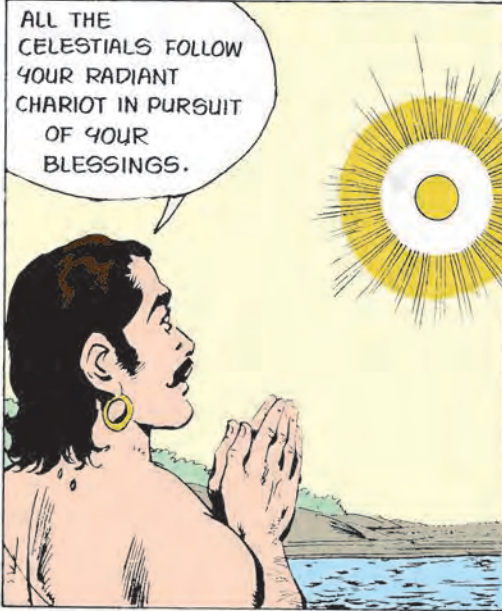


"STANDING IN THE WATERS OF GANGA, YUDHISHTHIRA FACED  
THE SUN, CONSUMED NOTHING BUT AIR AND OFFERED  
PRAYERS WITH FLOWERS AND GRAINS.

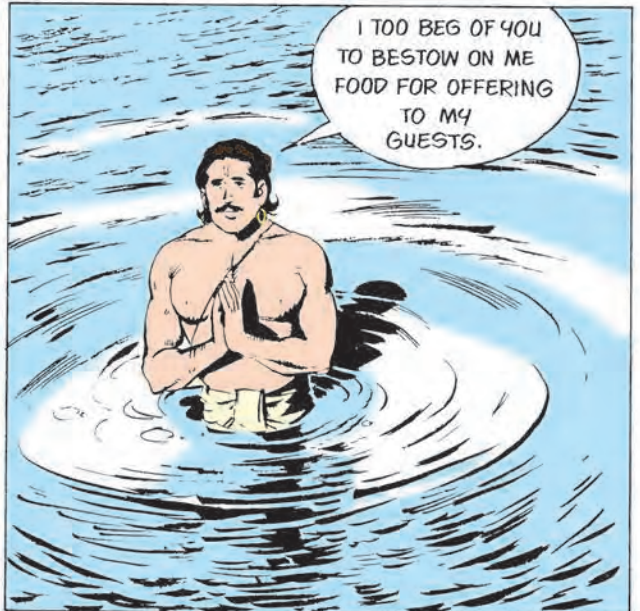


YOU ARE THE EYES OF THE  
UNIVERSE. YOU ARE THE  
SOUL OF ALL THAT IS  
LIVING.

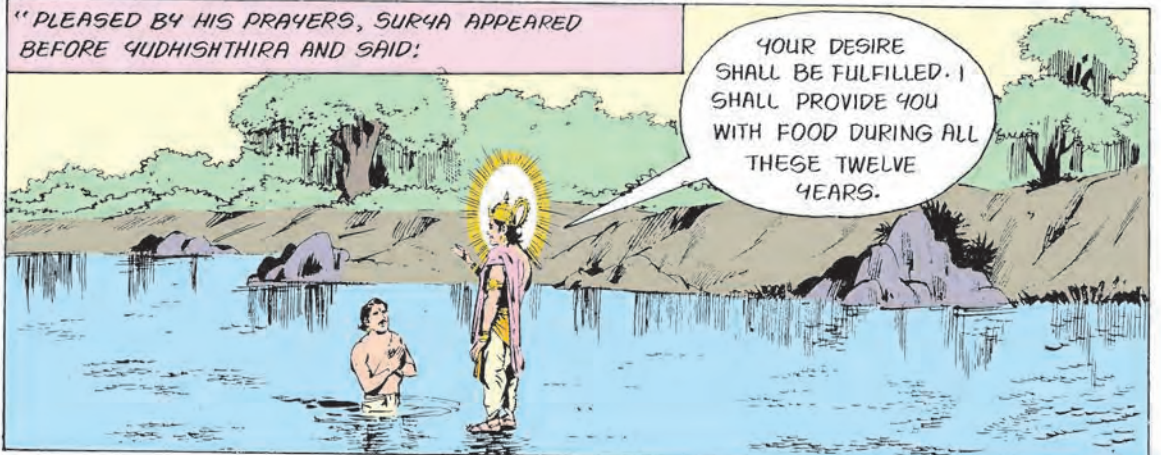
ALL THE  
CELESTIALS FOLLOW  
YOUR RADIANT  
CHARIOT IN PURSUIT  
OF YOUR  
BLESSINGS.



I TOO BEG OF YOU  
TO BESTOW ON ME  
FOOD FOR OFFERING  
TO MY  
GUESTS.

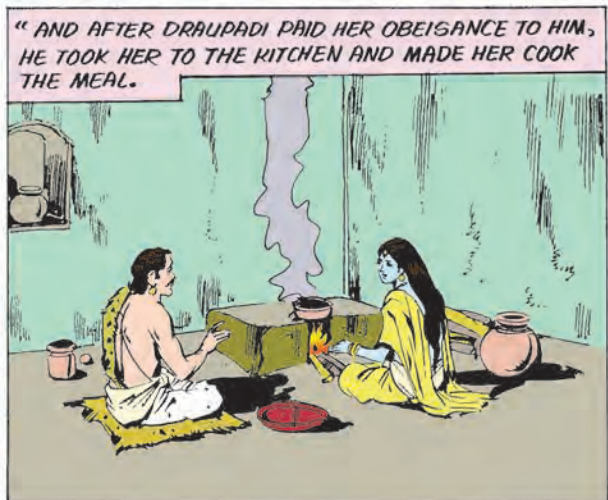
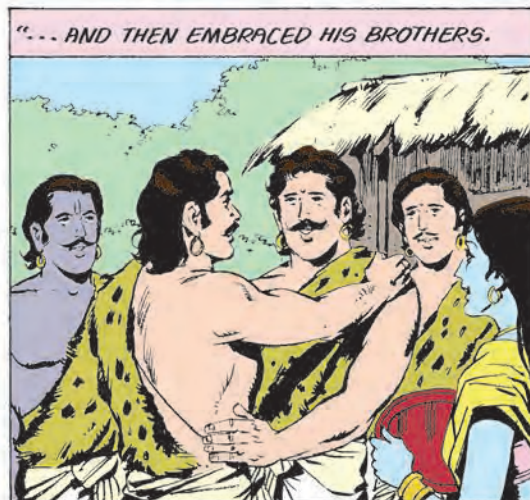
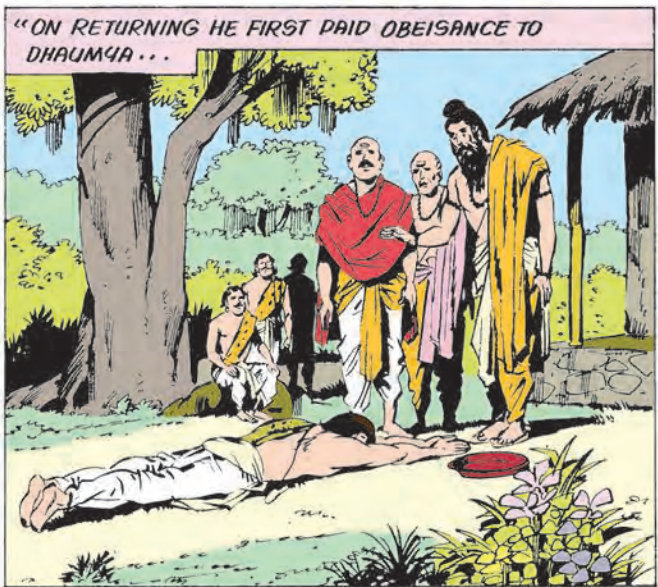
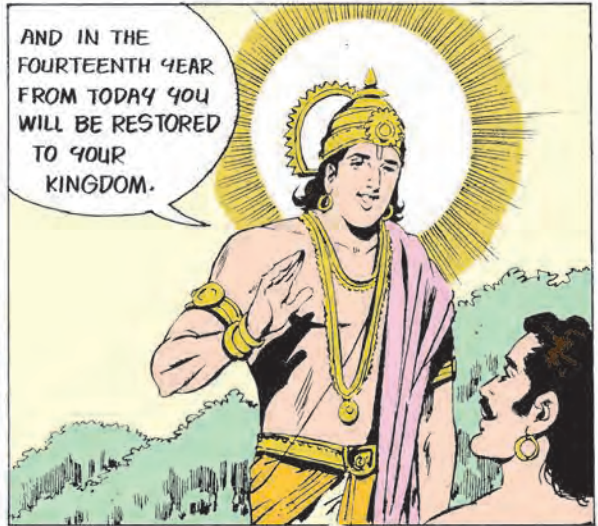
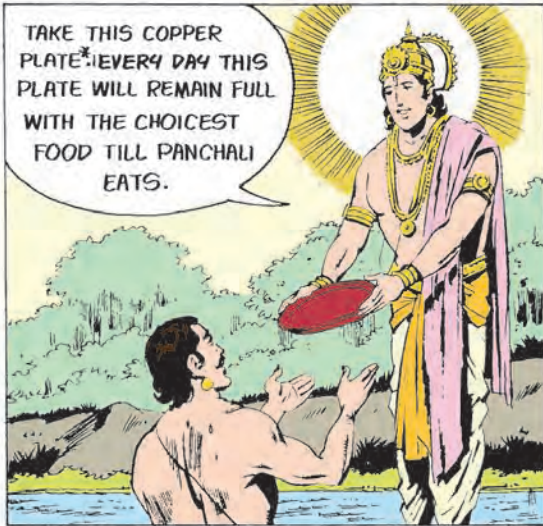


"PLEASED BY HIS PRAYERS, SURYA APPEARED  
BEFORE YUDHISHTHIRA AND SAID:



YOUR DESIRE  
SHALL BE FULFILLED. I  
SHALL PROVIDE YOU  
WITH FOOD DURING ALL  
THESE TWELVE  
YEARS.



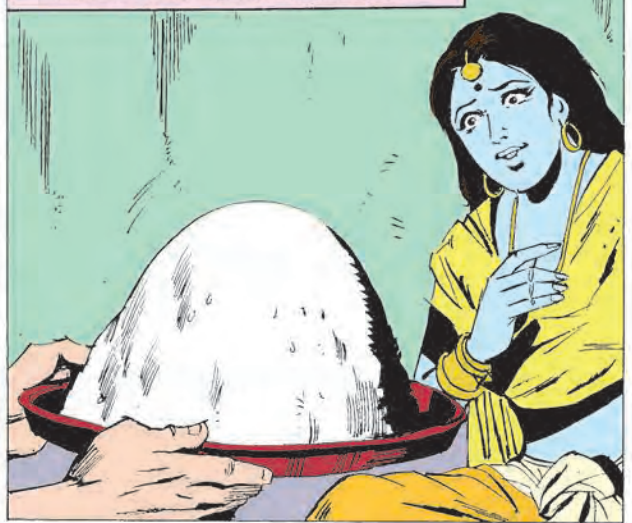




"THE FOOD COOKED WAS MEAGRE..."



"...BUT IT GREW TO FILL THE PLATE."



"AND YUDHISHTHIRA FIRST SERVED THE FOOD TO THE BRAHMANAS..."



"...THEN TO HIS BROTHERS ..."



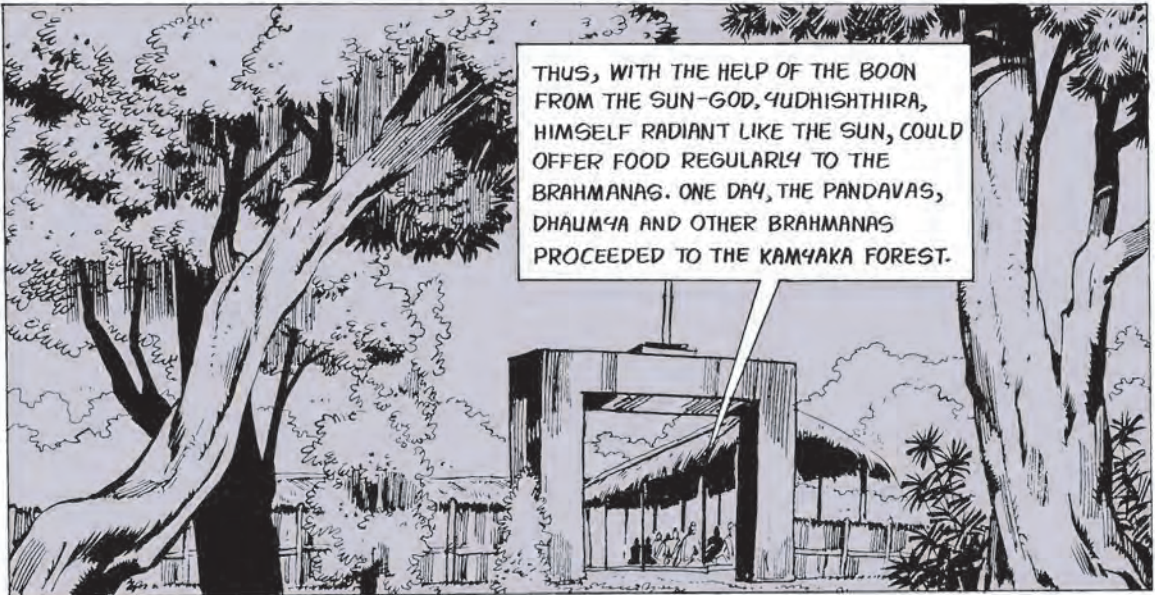
"...AND THEN ATE THE LEFT-OVERS HIMSELF."



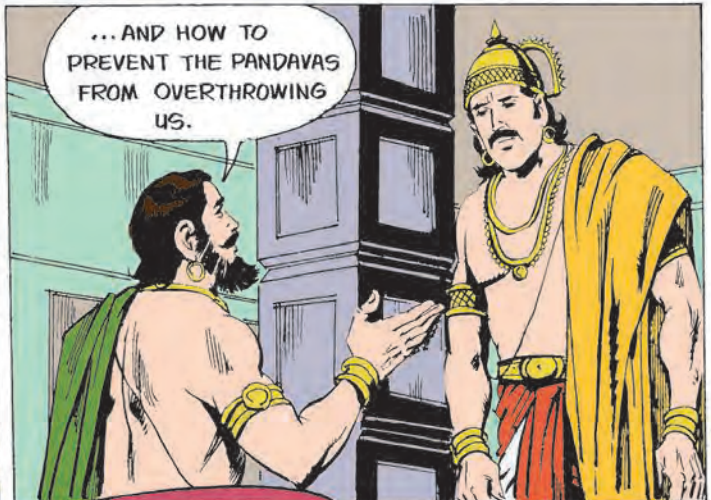
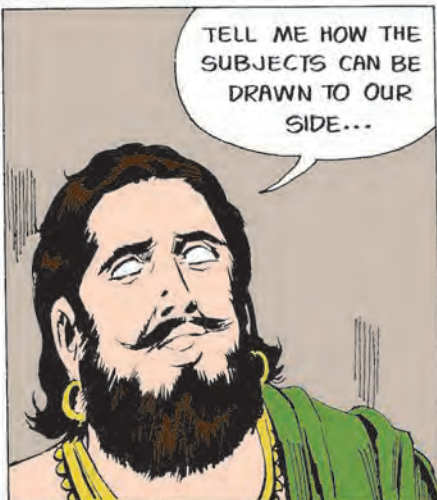
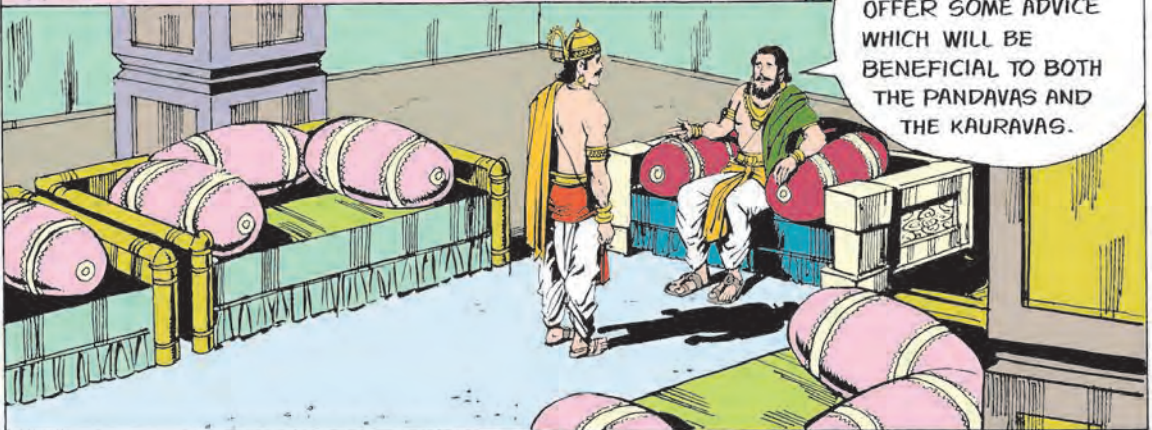
"AND ONLY WHEN DRAUPADI FINALLY FINISHED HER MEAL DID THE PLATE BECOME EMPTY."



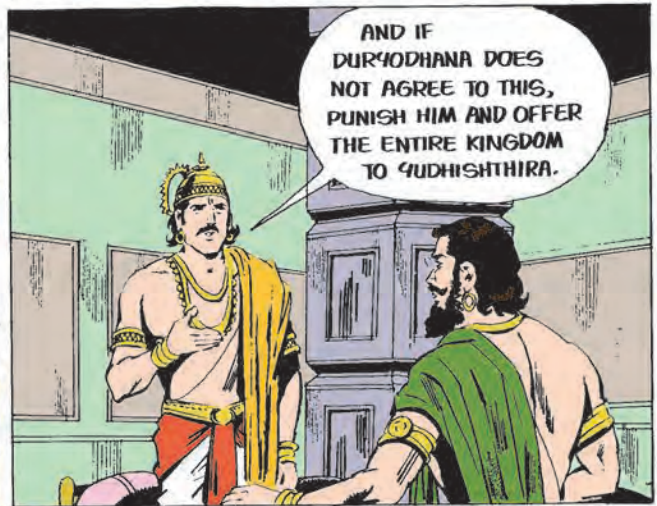
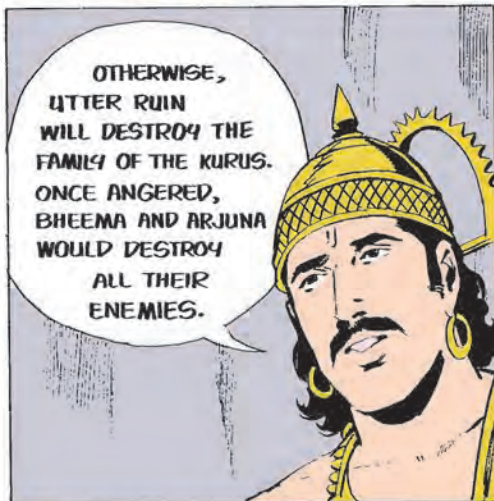
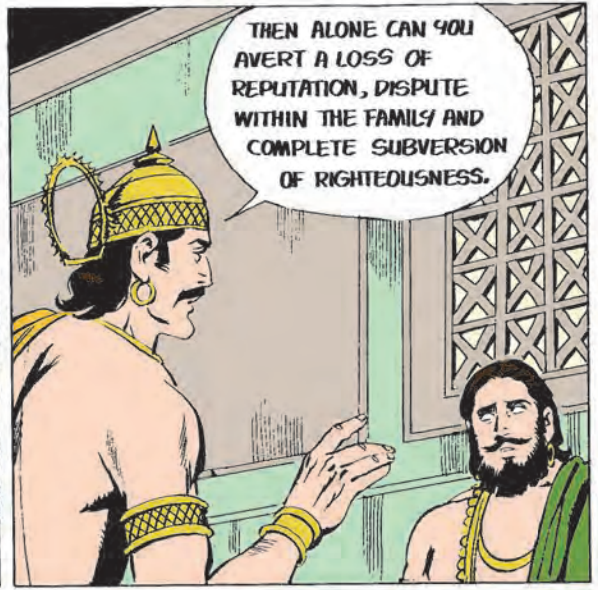




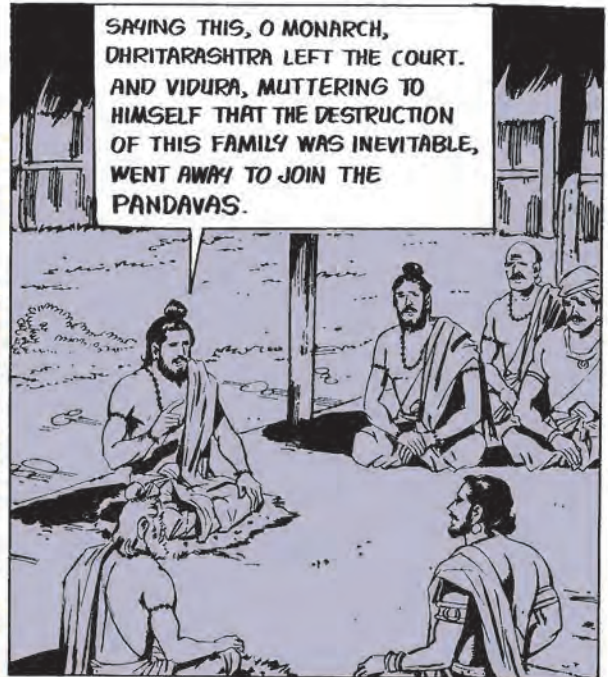
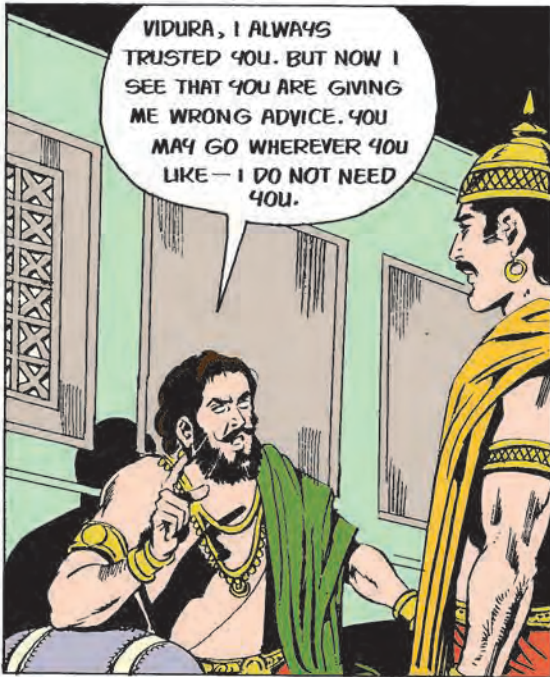
"AS THE PANDAVAS WENT TO THE FOREST, DHRITARASHTRA FELT SAD AND SENT FOR THE EVER-INTELLIGENT VIDURA. HE SAID TO HIM:



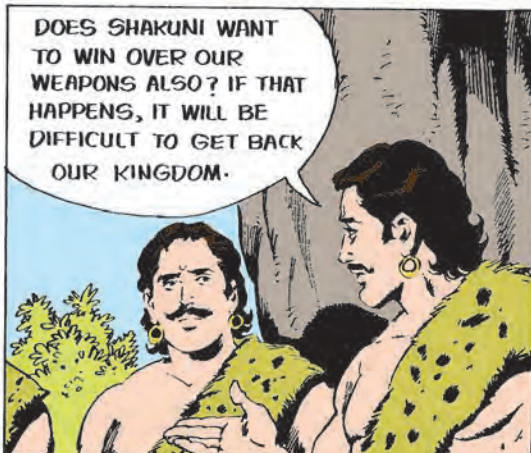
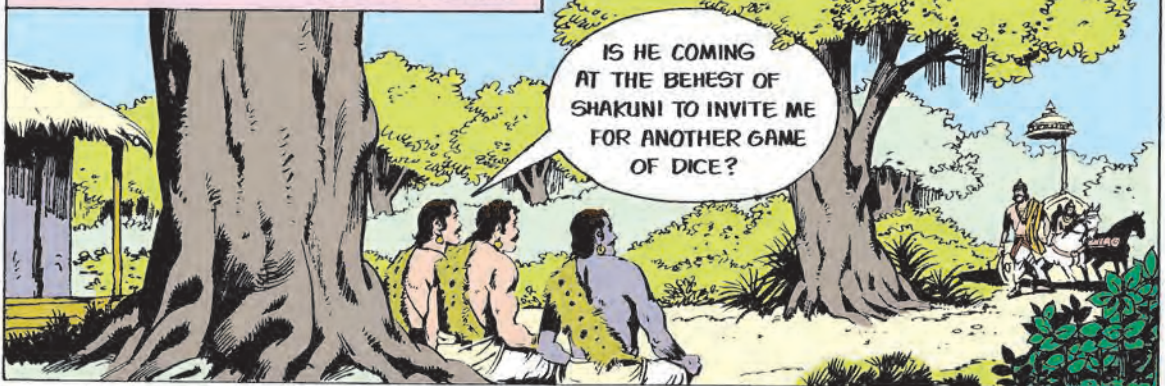








"IN THE FOREST, YUDHISHTHIRA WAS RESTING WITH DRAUPADI, HIS BROTHERS, AND THE BRAHMANAS, WHEN HE SAW VIDURA COMING TOWARDS THEM. HE THEN SAID TO BHEEMA:





"VIDURA TOLD THEM ABOUT HIS CONVERSATION WITH DHRITARASHTRA AND SAID:

LIKE AN AILING PERSON WHO LOSES HIS TASTE FOR FOOD, DHRITARASHTRA DID NOT PAY ANY HEED TO MY ADVICE.



NOW LISTEN TO MY ADVICE : ONE WHO FOLLOWS THE PATH OF FORGIVENESS IN SPITE OF GREAT SUFFERING...



... AND SHARES HIS FORTUNES WITH HIS ALLIES, WINS MASTERY OVER THE WHOLE WORLD.

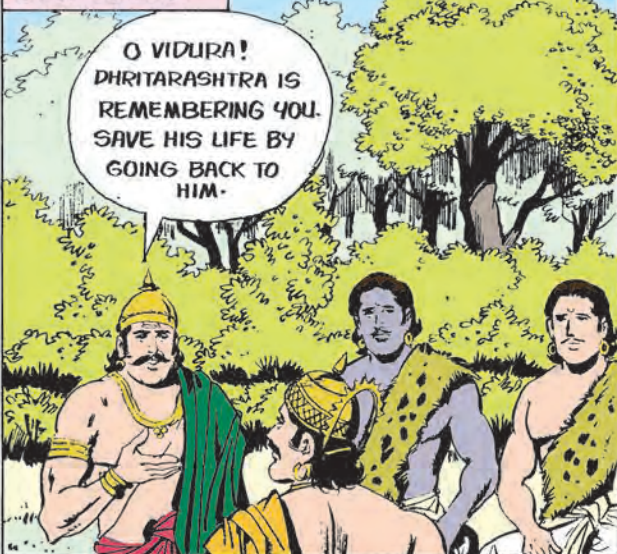


"WHILE VIDURA WAS ENGAGED IN CONVERSATION WITH THE PANDAVAS, SANJAYA, THE MESSENGER OF DHRITARASHTRA, CAME THERE.

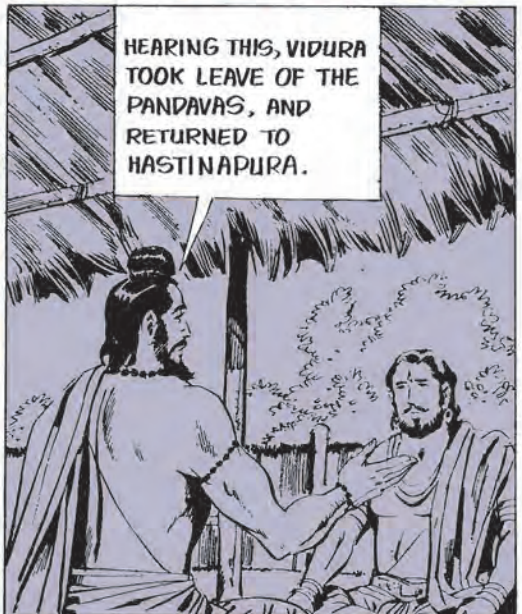


"AFTER PAYING OBEISANCE TO THEM AND RESTING A WHILE HE SAID:

O VIDURA! DHRITARASHTRA IS REMEMBERING YOU. SAVE HIS LIFE BY GOING BACK TO HIM.



HEARING THIS, VIDURA TOOK LEAVE OF THE PANDAVAS, AND RETURNED TO HASTINAPURA.





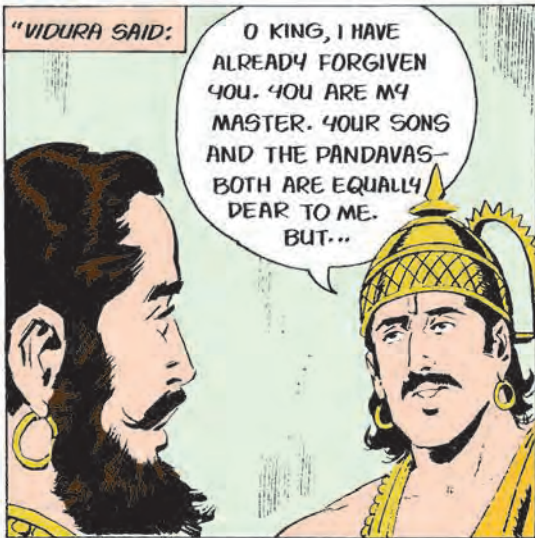
"DHRTIRASHTRA EMBRACED HIM AND SAID:

FORTUNATE  
I AM THAT YOU  
HAVE COME BACK  
TO ME. PLEASE  
FORGIVE ME.

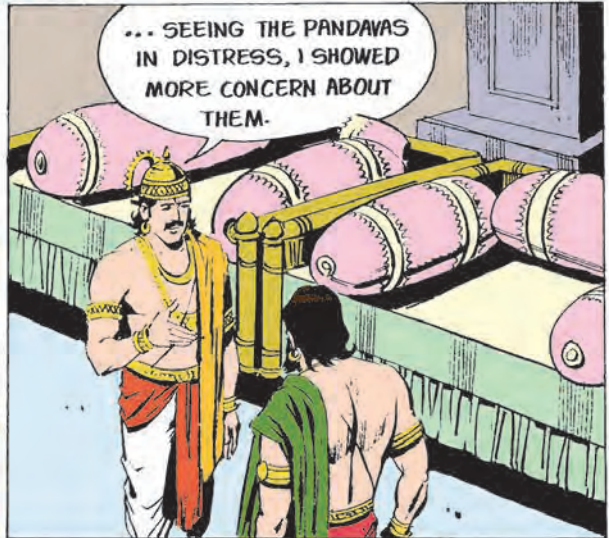


"VIDURA SAID:

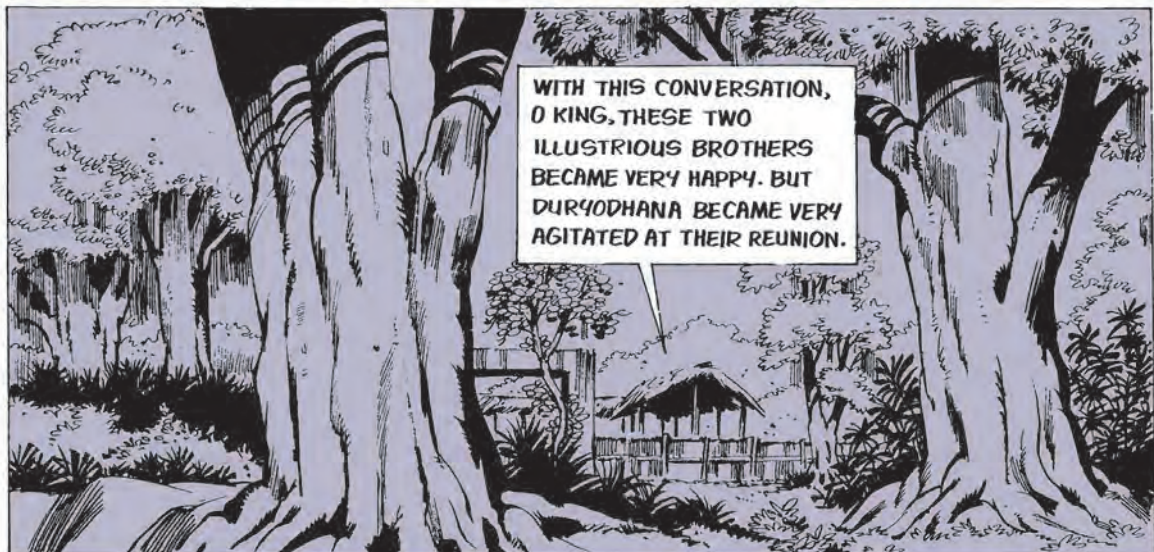
O KING, I HAVE  
ALREADY FORGIVEN  
YOU. YOU ARE MY  
MASTER. YOUR SONS  
AND THE PANDAVAS—  
BOTH ARE EQUALLY  
DEAR TO ME.  
BUT...



... SEEING THE PANDAVAS  
IN DISTRESS, I SHOWED  
MORE CONCERN ABOUT  
THEM.

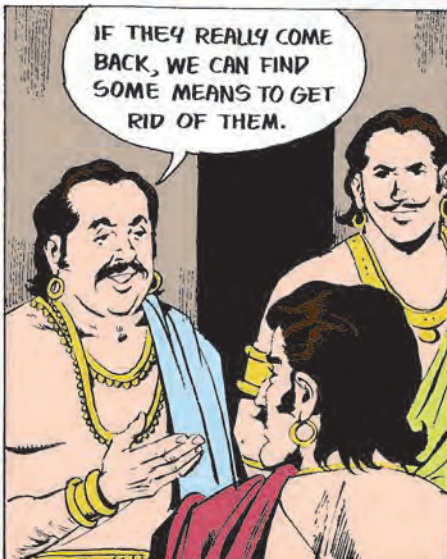
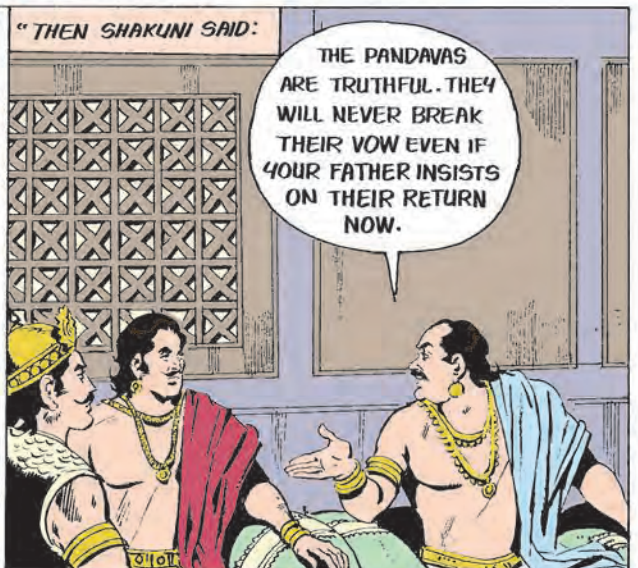
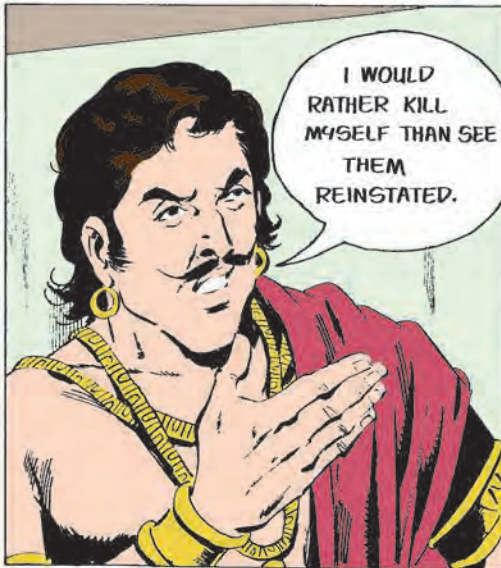
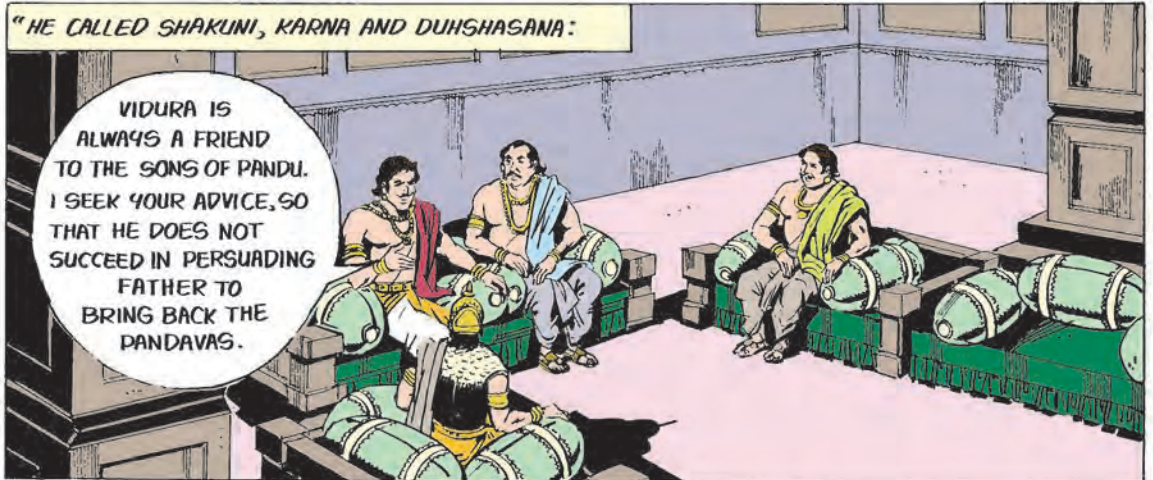


WITH THIS CONVERSATION,  
O KING, THESE TWO  
ILLUSTRIOUS BROTHERS  
BECAME VERY HAPPY. BUT  
DURYODHANA BECAME VERY  
AGITATED AT THEIR REUNION.

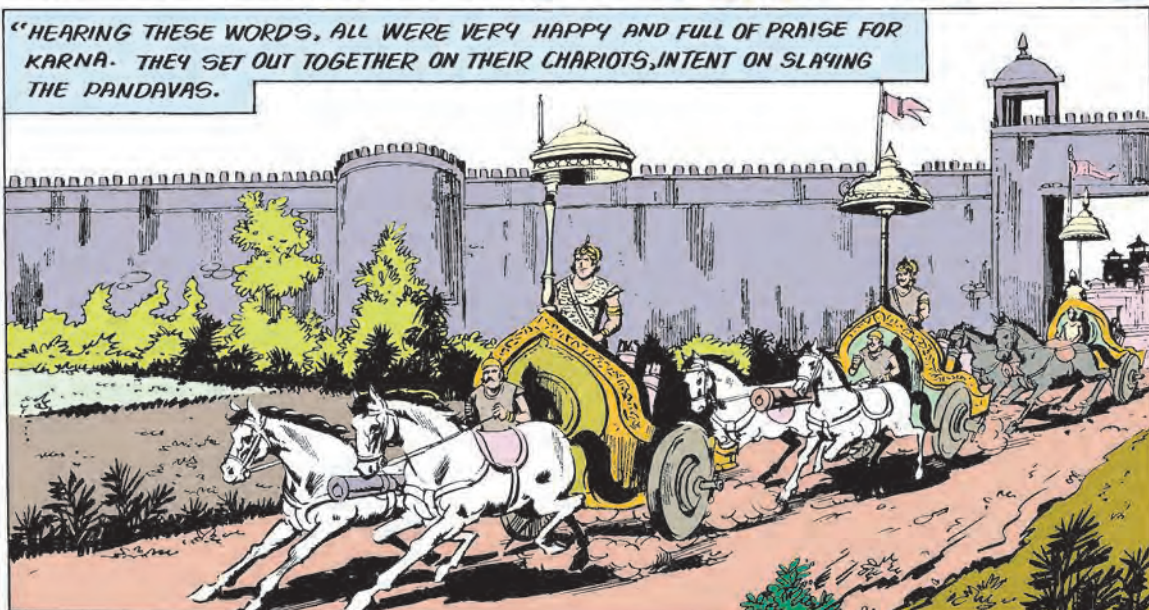
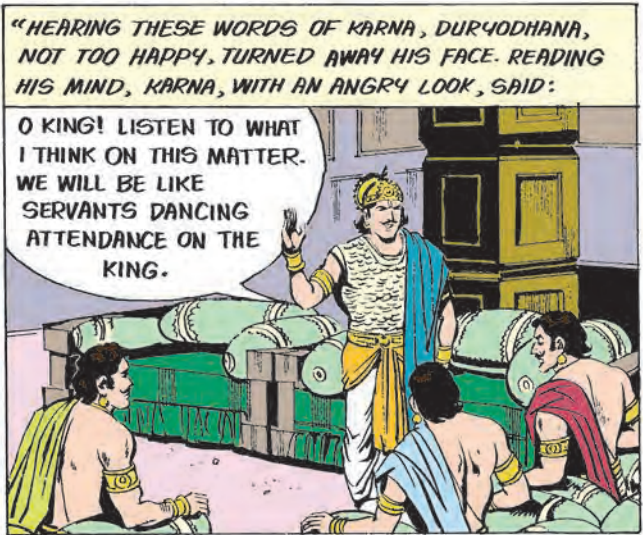
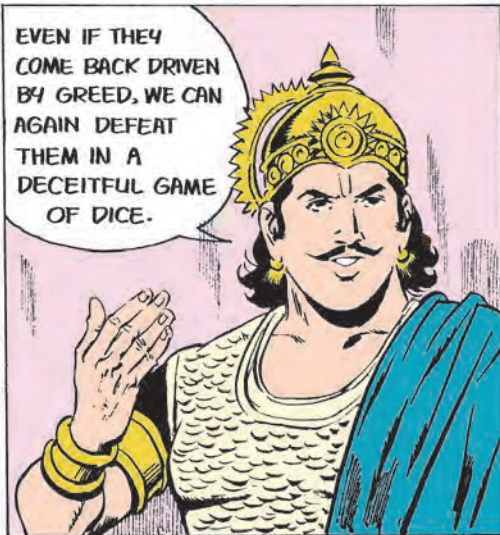




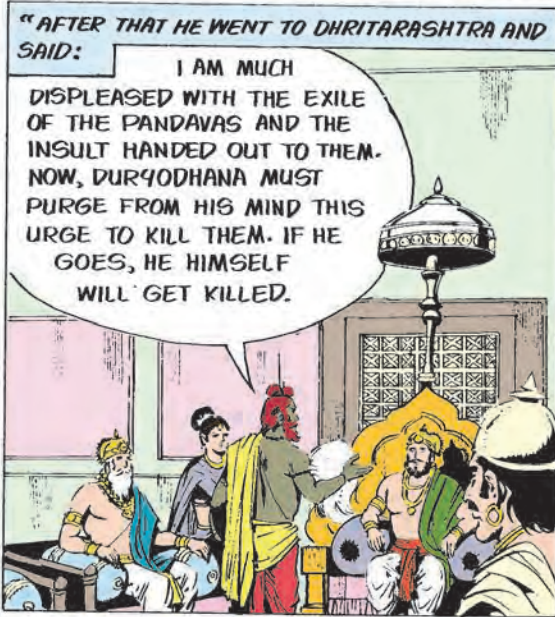
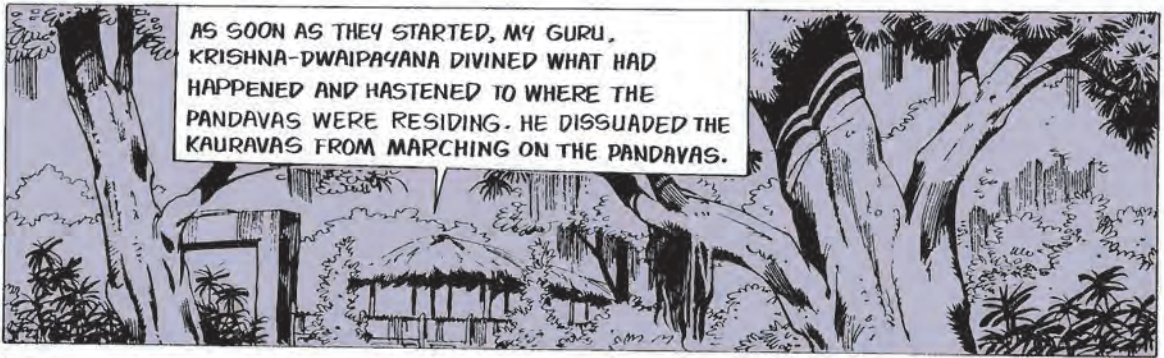
"HE CALLED SHAKUNI, KARNA AND DUHSHASANA:"



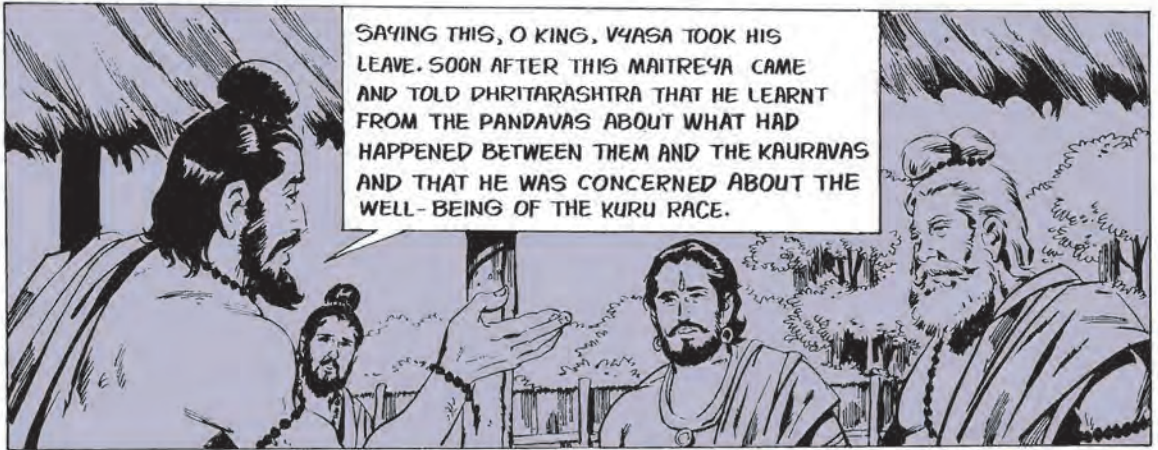




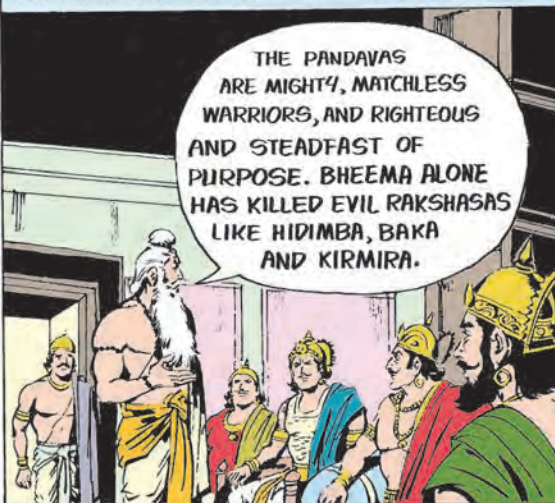






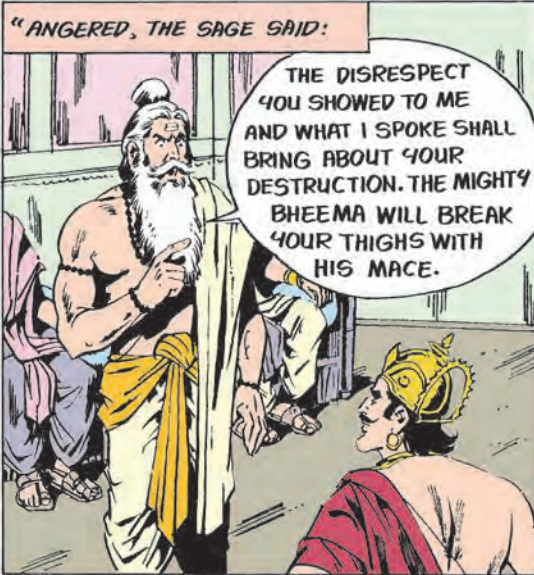


"HE THEN TURNED TO DURYODHANA AND SAID:



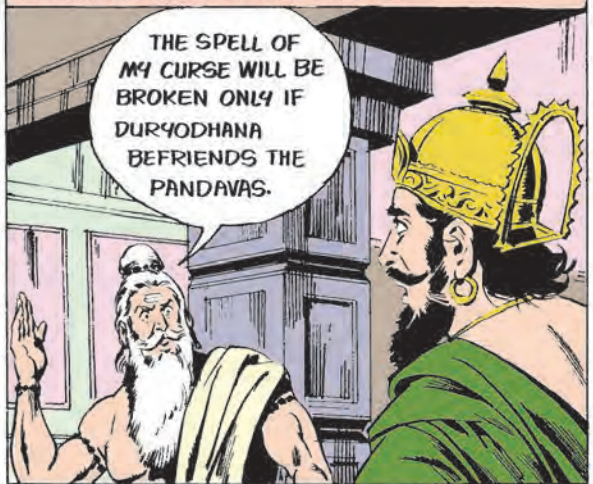


"ANGERED, THE SAGE SAID:

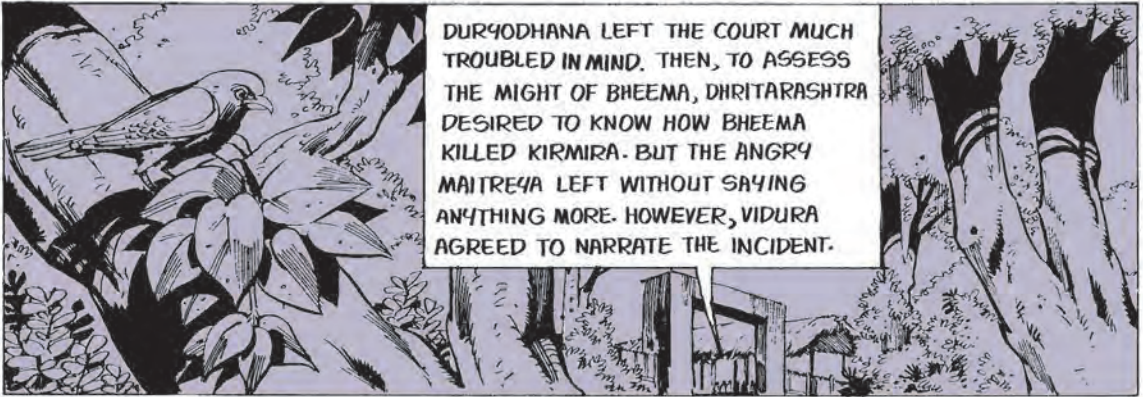


THE DISRESPECT  
YOU SHOWED TO ME  
AND WHAT I SPOKE SHALL  
BRING ABOUT YOUR  
DESTRUCTION. THE MIGHTY  
BHEEMA WILL BREAK  
YOUR THIGHS WITH  
HIS MACE.

"ALARMED, DHRITARASHTRA TRIED TO  
APPEASE THE SAGE AND PLEADED FOR  
FORGIVENESS. THEN MAITREYA SAID:



THE SPELL OF  
MY CURSE WILL BE  
BROKEN ONLY IF  
DURYODHANA  
BEFRIENDS THE  
PANDAVAS.



DURYODHANA LEFT THE COURT MUCH  
TROUBLED IN MIND. THEN, TO ASSESS  
THE MIGHT OF BHEEMA, DHRITARASHTRA  
DESIRED TO KNOW HOW BHEEMA  
KILLED KIRMIRA. BUT THE ANGRY  
MAITREYA LEFT WITHOUT SAYING  
ANYTHING MORE. HOWEVER, VIDURA  
AGREED TO NARRATE THE INCIDENT.

"VIDURA SAID:



THREE DAYS AFTER THEY  
LEFT THIS PLACE, THE PANDAVAS  
IN THE DEAD OF THE NIGHT,  
REACHED KAMYAKA, A FOREST  
INFESTED WITH MAN-EATING  
RAKSHASAS.





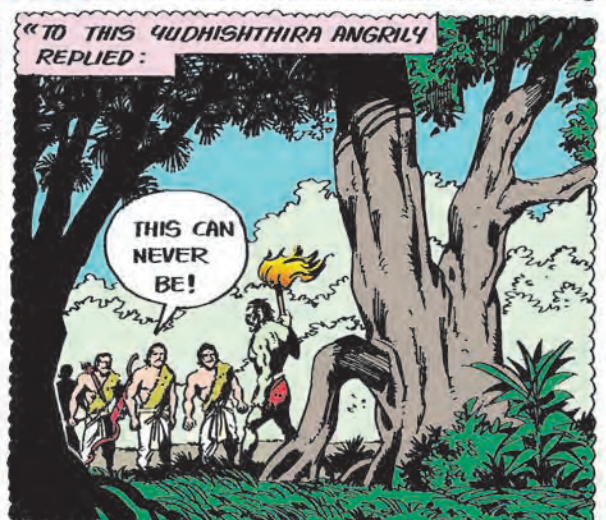
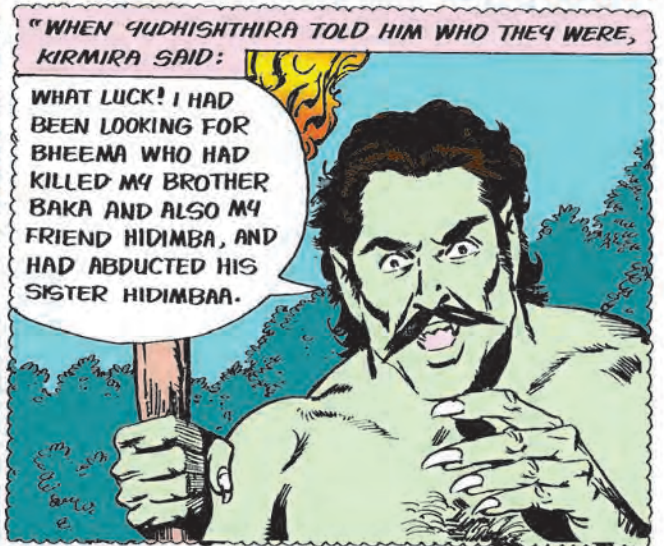
"AS SOON AS THEY ENTERED THE FOREST, THEY SAW A THREATENING RAKSHASA WITH A TORCH IN HIS HAND. HIS RED EYES WERE BURNING LIKE FIRE, HIS LONG HAIR WAS STANDING UPRIGHT AND HIS LONG WHITE TEETH WERE PIERCING THE DARKNESS."



"SEEING THE PANDAVAS HE STRETCHED HIS LONG ARM AND LET OUT A THUNDEROUS ROAR. WITH THIS ROAR ALL THE BIRDS AND BEASTS FLED IN FEAR."









"THEN THE MIGHTY BHEEMA UPROOTED A HUGE TREE AND REMOVED ALL ITS FOLIAGE."



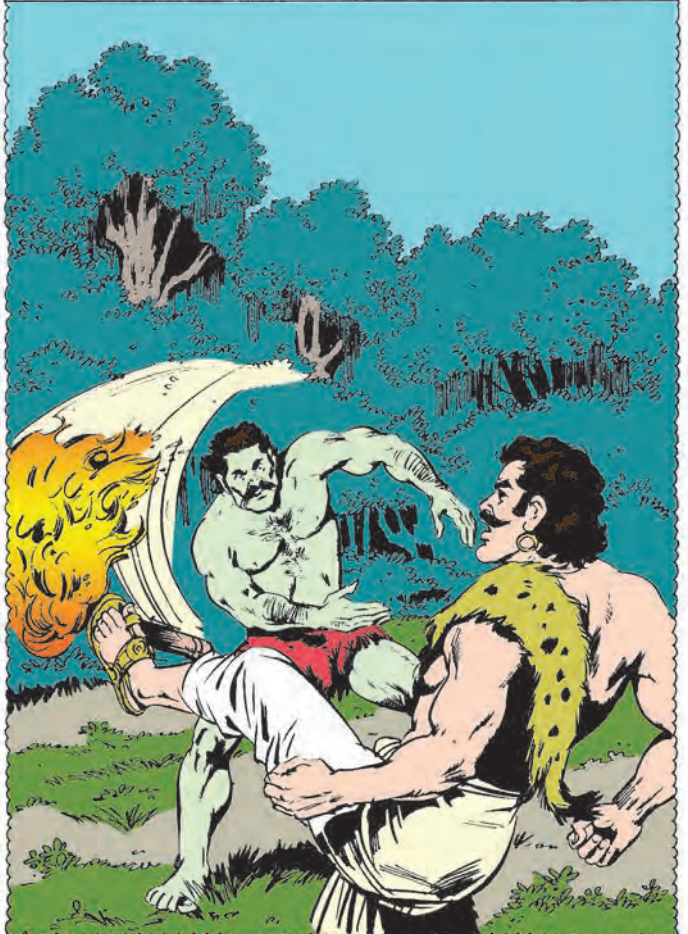
"ARJUNA ALSO READIED HIS GANDEEVA BOW."



"BHEEMA STOPPED ARJUNA, AND THEN GOING FORWARD HIT THE RAKSHASA ON HIS HEAD WITH THE MIGHT OF INDRA WIELDING HIS THUNDERBOLT."



"UNMOVED, THE RAKSHASA HURLED THE TORCH AT BHEEMA WHO EASILY STOPPED IT WITH HIS LEFT FOOT."





"KIRMIRA TOO UPROOTED A TREE. THE TWO FOUGHT EACH OTHER WITH TREES AS WEAPONS. AND THE TREES BROKE AS REEDS IN THE COURSE OF THE FIGHT.



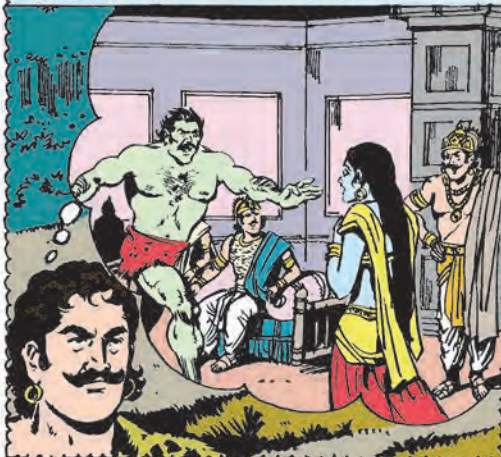
"AFTER BATTLING WITH TREES FOR SOME TIME, THE ANGRY RAKSHASA LIFTED A ROCK AND THREW IT AT BHEEMA.



"AND SEEING HIM UNDAUNTED, RUSHED AT HIM AND CAUGHT HIM BY HIS ARMS.



"BHEEMA WAS STILL BURNING WITH ANGER BECAUSE OF THE INSULTS HEAPED ON DRAUPADI BY DURYODHANA. HIS WHOLE WRATH NOW FELL ON KIRMIRA.



"HE CAUGHT KIRMIRA BY HIS WAIST AND SHOOK HIM AND THE RAKSHASA TREMBLED LIKE A TREE IN A STORM.





"AS HE TRIED TO CRUSH KIRMIRA IN HIS ARMS, THE RAKSHASA SCREAMED IN PAIN.



"SEEING THAT THE RAKSHASA HAD ALMOST FAINTED, HE PLACED HIS KNEE ON THE WAIST OF KIRMIRA AND STRANGLED HIM.



"VIDURA ENDED HIS STORY :

O MONARCH! ON MY WAY, I SAW LYING THERE THE BODY OF KIRMIRA SLAIN BY BHEEMA. AND I HEARD OF THIS SUPER-HUMAN DEED OF BHEEMA FROM THE BRAHMANAS WHO WERE PRESENT THERE.



HEARING IN DETAIL HOW BHEEMA HAD KILLED KIRMIRA, KING DHRTARASHTRA HEAVED A DEEP SIGH AND BECAME IMMERSSED IN THOUGHT.



"ON LEARNING THAT THE PANDAVAS HAD GONE INTO EXILE, THE BHOJAS, THE ANDHAKAS AND THE VRISHNIS CAME TO THE FOREST TO MEET THEM.





"THE PANCHALA PRINCE, DHRISTADYUMNA AND THE KING OF CHEDI, DHRISTAKETU AND THE VALOROUS PRINCE OF KEKAYA ALSO CAME THERE CURSING THE SONS OF DHRTARASHTRA. WITH KRISHNA AT THEIR HEAD, ALL THOSE KSHATRIYA CHIEFS SAT, SURROUNDING THE RIGHTEOUS YUDHISHTHIRA.



"AS THEY DISCUSSED THE FUTURE, KRISHNA SAID:

THE EARTH WILL BE DRENCHED WITH THE BLOOD OF THIS EVIL QUARTET OF DURYODHANA, KARNA, SHAKUNI AND DUHSHASANA.



"THEN HE TURNED TO YUDHISHTHIRA AND SAID:

WE ARE READY TO FIGHT AND INFLICT DEFEAT ON THEM AND THEIR ALLIES AND MAKE YOU THE KING.



WHILE SAYING THIS, KRISHNA BECAME MORE AND MORE ANGRY AND IT APPEARED AS IF HE WOULD DESTROY THE WHOLE UNIVERSE.





"THEN ARJUNA RECOUNTED EPISODES FROM KRISHNA'S PREVIOUS INCARNATIONS AND SAID:

YOU ARE THE  
ALMIGHTY. YOU ARE  
THE TRUTH, THE LORD  
OF LORDS AND THE KING  
OF THE UNIVERSE.



"TO THIS DRUPADI ADDED—

IMMANENT  
LORD! IN YOU  
EVERYTHING IS  
ESTABLISHED.



THEN, O KRISHNA HOW  
COULD ONE LIKE ME, THE  
WIFE OF THE PANDAVA HEROES,  
THE SISTER OF DHRISTADYUMNA  
AND, ABOVE ALL, A FRIEND OF  
YOURS, HAVE BEEN DRAGGED  
INTO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE  
KAURAVAS TO BE  
DISHONOURD?



FOR FOUR  
REASONS, KRISHNA,  
I MUST ALWAYS BE  
PROTECTED BY YOU:  
FOR KINSHIP, FOR  
HONOUR, FOR  
FRIENDSHIP AND,  
ABOVE ALL, YOU  
ARE THE  
ALL-POWERFUL LORD,  
KRISHNA.



"KRISHNA SAID:

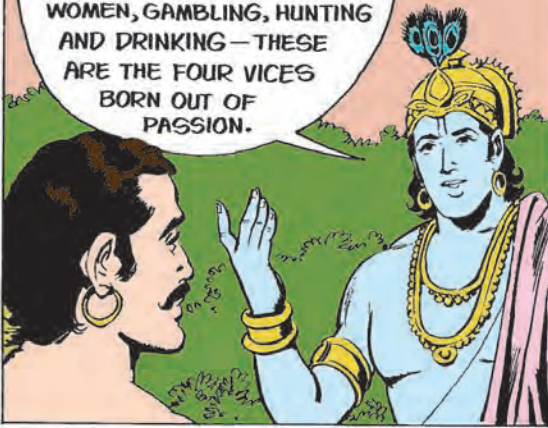
DO NOT  
GRIEVE. I PROMISE  
YOU THIS; YOU WILL  
BECOME THE QUEEN  
OF KINGS.



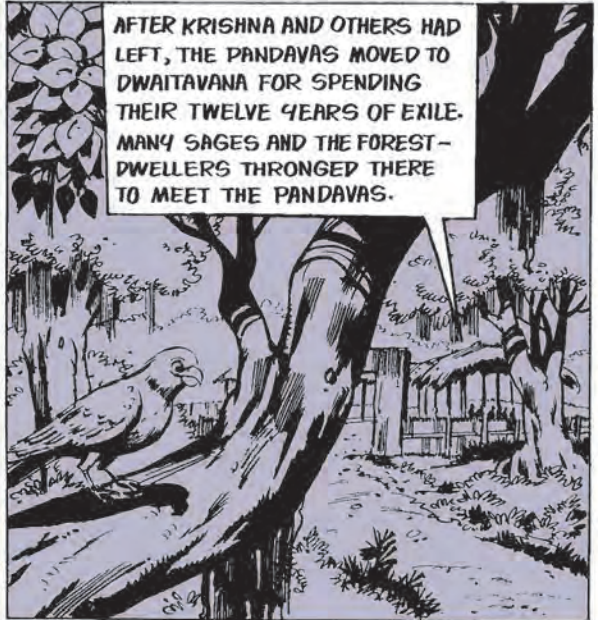


"TURNING TO YUDHISHTHIRA, KRISHNA SAID:

IF I HAD BEEN PRESENT  
IN DWARAKA THEN, I  
WOULD HAVE STOPPED THE  
GAME OF DICE BEING PLAYED.  
WOMEN, GAMBLING, HUNTING  
AND DRINKING—THESE  
ARE THE FOUR VICES  
BORN OUT OF  
PASSION.

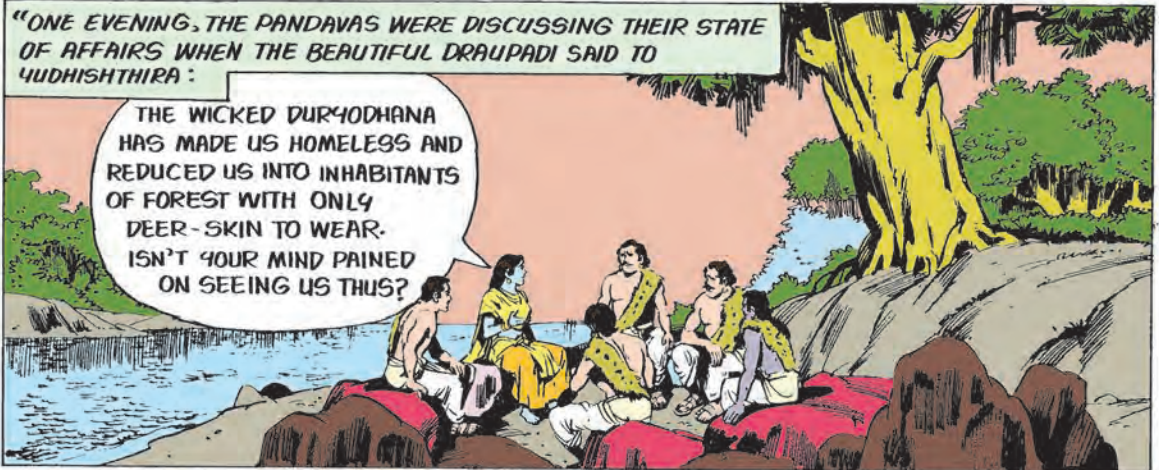


AFTER KRISHNA AND OTHERS HAD  
LEFT, THE PANDAVAS MOVED TO  
DWAITAVANA FOR SPENDING  
THEIR TWELVE YEARS OF EXILE.  
MANY SAGES AND THE FOREST-  
DWELLERS THROGGED THERE  
TO MEET THE PANDAVAS.

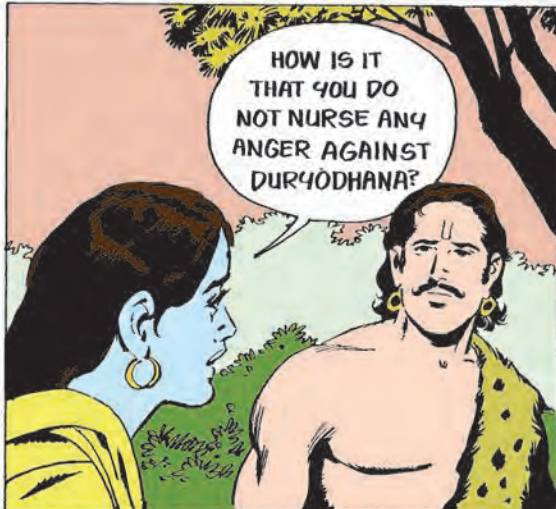


"ONE EVENING, THE PANDAVAS WERE DISCUSSING THEIR STATE  
OF AFFAIRS WHEN THE BEAUTIFUL DRAUPADI SAID TO  
YUDHISHTHIRA :

THE WICKED DURYODHANA  
HAS MADE US HOMELESS AND  
REDUCED US INTO INHABITANTS  
OF FOREST WITH ONLY  
DEER-SKIN TO WEAR.  
ISN'T YOUR MIND PAINED  
ON SEEING US THUS?



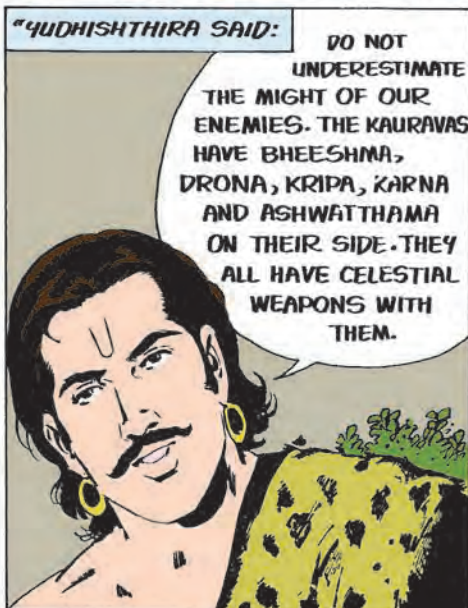
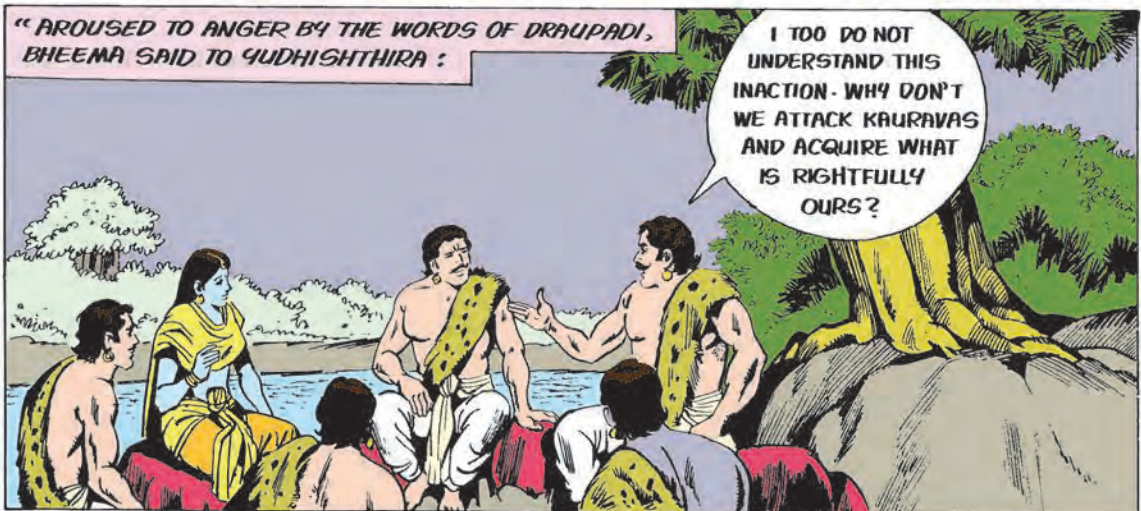
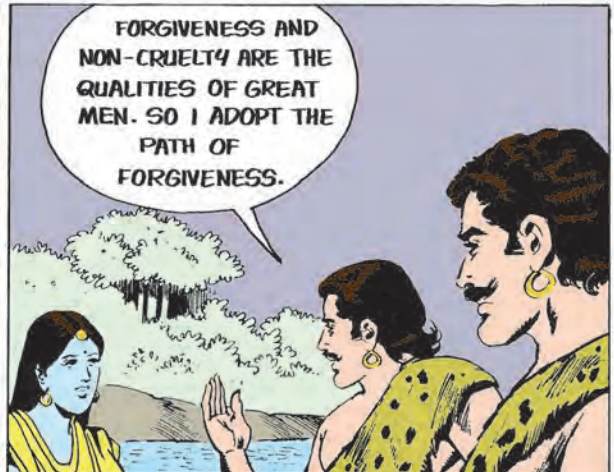
HOW IS IT  
THAT YOU DO  
NOT NURSE ANY  
ANGER AGAINST  
DURYODHANA?



IT IS CONTRARY TO  
THE NATURE  
OF A  
KSHATRIYA.



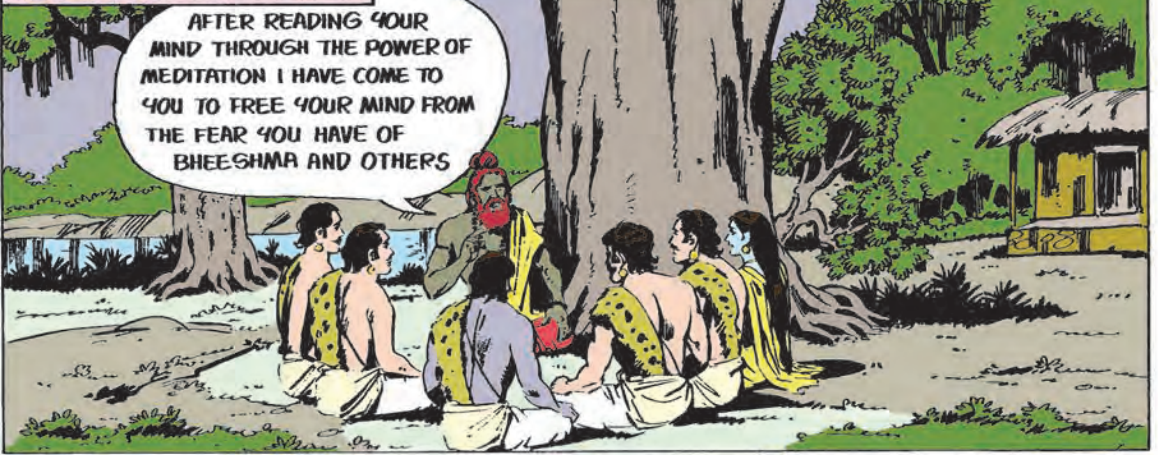






"WHEN THE PANDAVAS WERE CONVERSING THUS, THE GREAT SAGE VYASA APPEARED BEFORE THEM. AFTER THE PANDAVAS PAID THEIR OBEISANCE TO HIM, HE SAID:

AFTER READING YOUR MIND THROUGH THE POWER OF MEDITATION I HAVE COME TO YOU TO FREE YOUR MIND FROM THE FEAR YOU HAVE OF BHEESHMA AND OTHERS

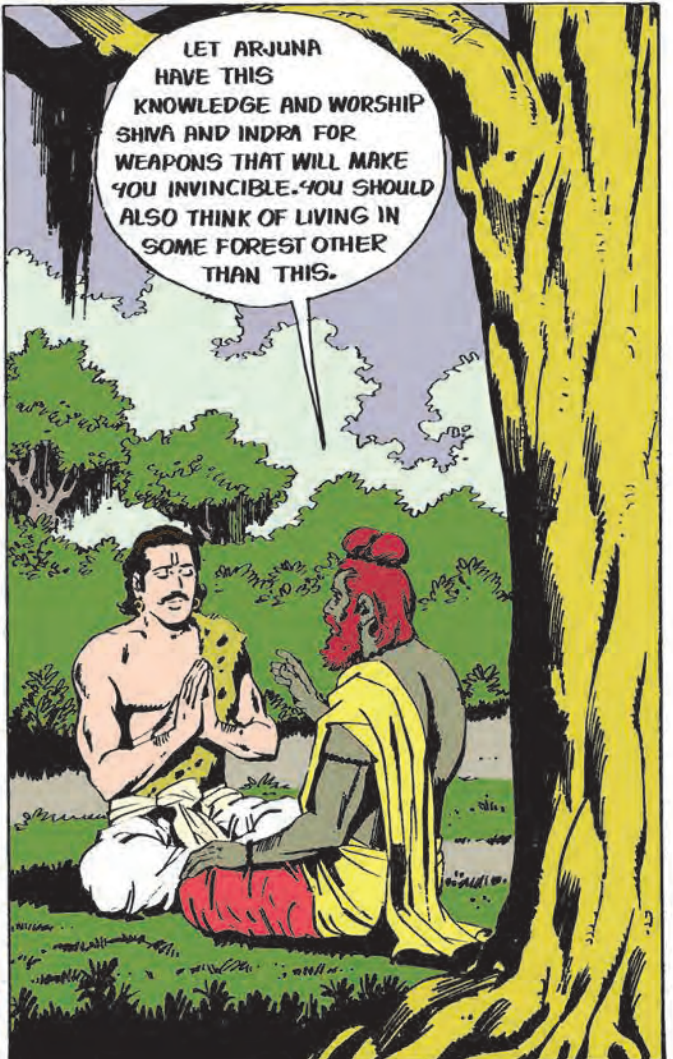


"HE THEN CALLED YUDHISHTHIRA ASIDE AND SAID:

TAKE THIS SECRET KNOWLEDGE NAMED PRATISMRTI, OBTAINING WHICH THE MIGHTY ARJUNA WILL ACHIEVE SUCCESS.

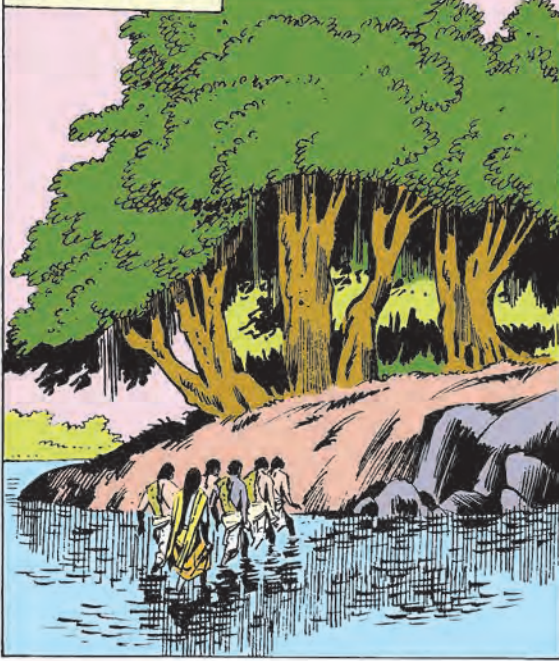


LET ARJUNA HAVE THIS KNOWLEDGE AND WORSHIP SHIVA AND INDRA FOR WEAPONS THAT WILL MAKE YOU INVINCIBLE. YOU SHOULD ALSO THINK OF LIVING IN SOME FOREST OTHER THAN THIS.



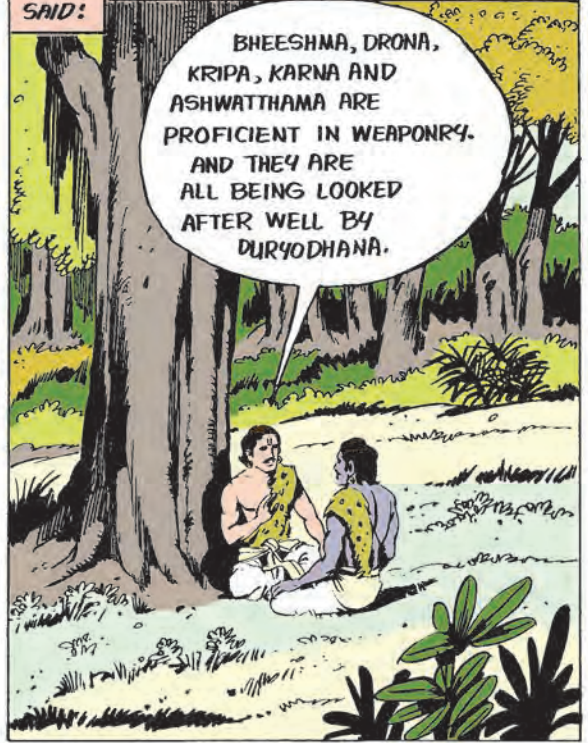


"AFTER IMPARTING THUS THE YOGA VIDYA, VYASA DISAPPEARED. THE RIGHTEOUS YUDHISHTHIRA WENT FROM THE DVAITA TO THE FOREST KNOWN AS KAMYAKA ON THE BANKS OF THE SARASWATI.

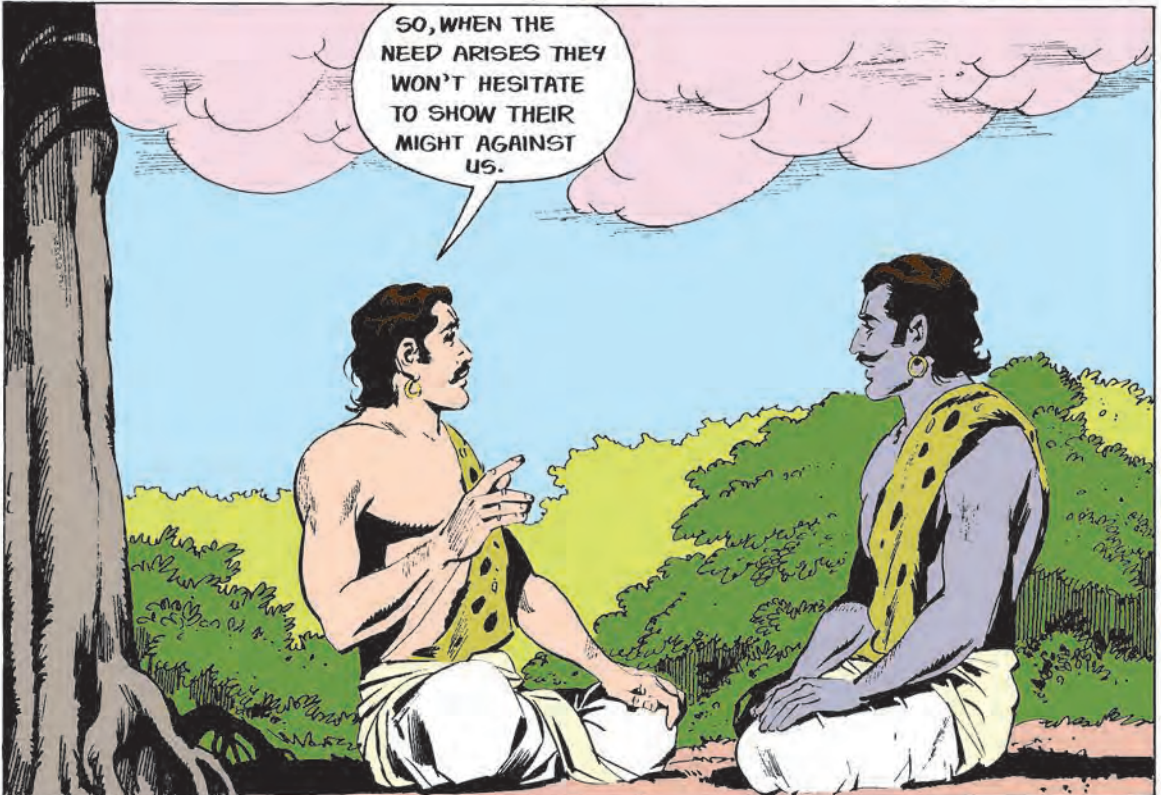


"THEN, REMEMBERING THE SAGE'S ADVICE, YUDHISHTHIRA CALLED ARJUNA TO HIS SIDE AND SAID:

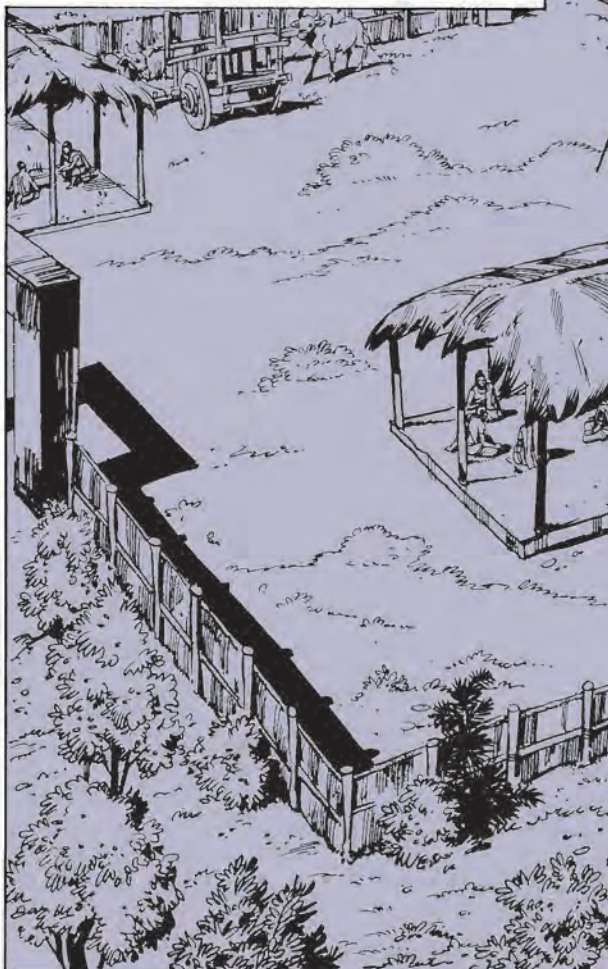
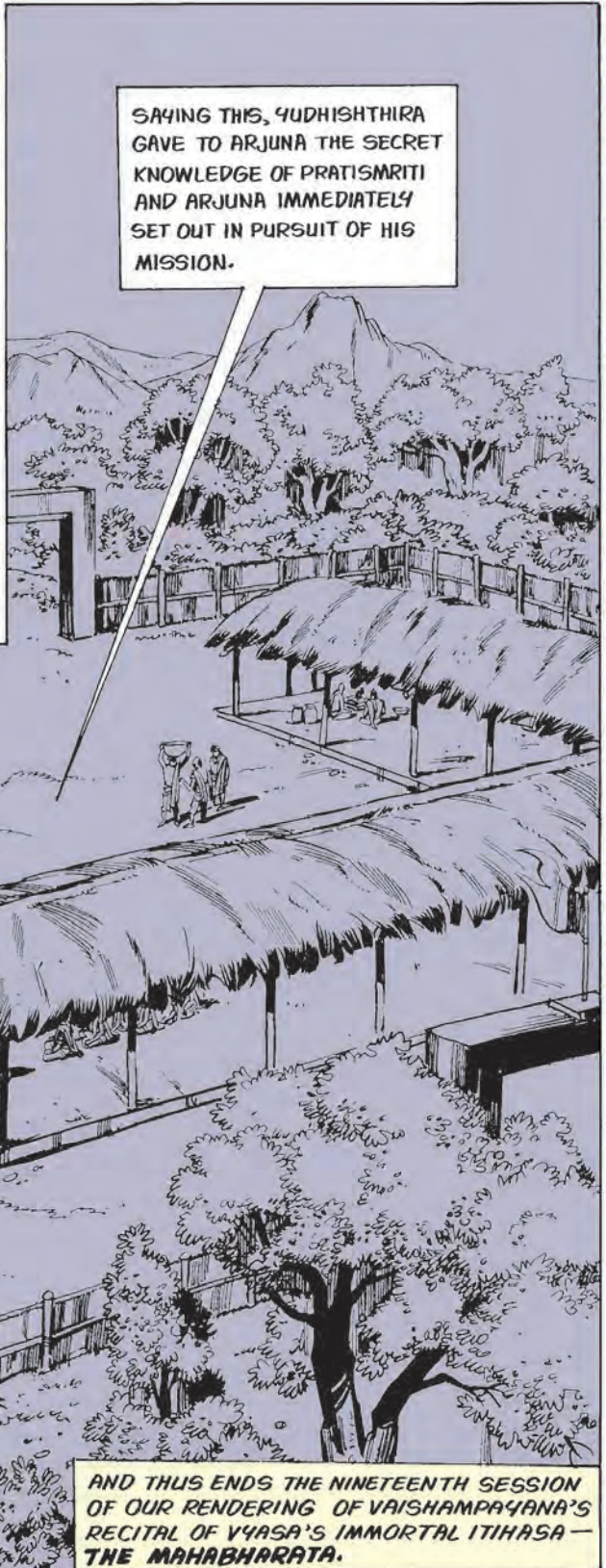
BHEESHMA, DRONA, KRIPA, KARNA AND ASHWATTHAMA ARE PROFICIENT IN WEAPONRY. AND THEY ARE ALL BEING LOOKED AFTER WELL BY DURYODHANA.



SO, WHEN THE NEED ARISES THEY WON'T HESITATE TO SHOW THEIR MIGHT AGAINST US.







AND THUS ENDS THE NINETEENTH SESSION OF OUR RENDERING OF VAISHAMPAYANA'S RECITAL OF VYASA'S IMMORTAL ITIHASA — THE MAHABHARATA.



# Mahabharata - 20

## ARJUNA'S QUEST FOR WEAPONS

BIDDEN BY YUDHISHTHIRA, ARJUNA PREPARED TO LEAVE ON HIS QUEST OF ACQUIRING CELESTIAL WEAPONS WITH THE HELP OF THE SECRET KNOWLEDGE OF PRATISMRTI. HE BURNED WITHIN WITH THE DESIRE TO OBTAIN THE WEAPONS FROM INDRA AND SLAY THE SONS OF DHRTIRASHTRA.

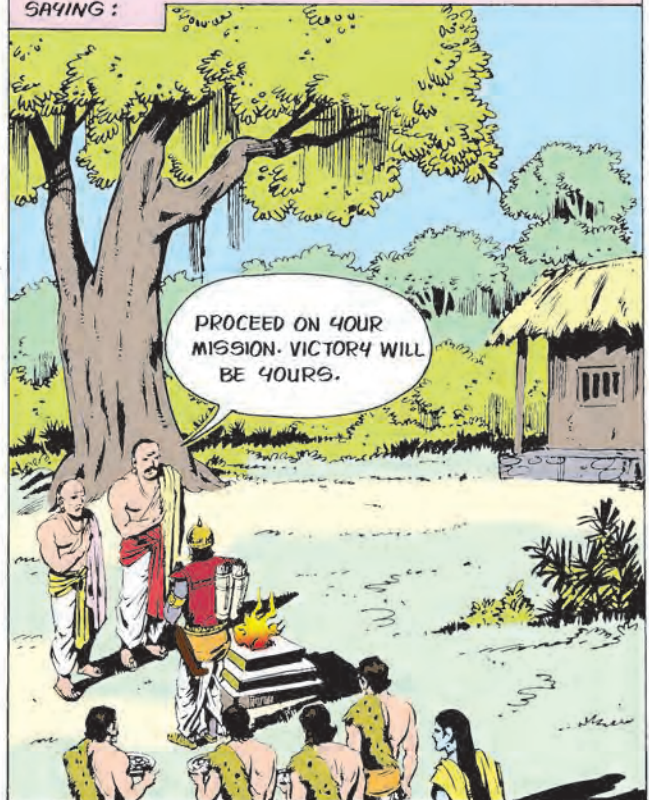


"HE EQUIPPED HIMSELF WITH THE GANDEEVA\*, TWO INEXHAUSTIBLE QUIVERS, ARMOURS, FINGERSHIELDS AND A LEATHER ARM-BAND.



\* NAME OF ARJUNA'S BOW.

"HE THEN OFFERED OBOLATION TO THE FIRE GOD AND GOLD COINS TO THE BRAHMANAS. THE LATTER BLESSED HIM, SAYING :



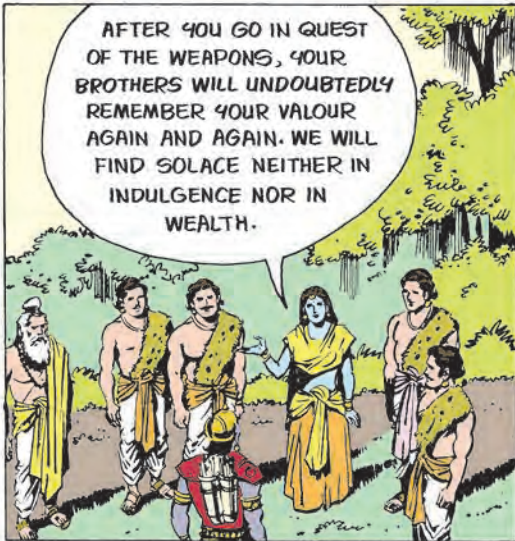


"SEEING ARJUNA, IN HIS WAR-LIKE ATTIRE, TAKING LEAVE OF OTHERS, DRAUPADI SAID:

O MIGHTY DHANANJAYA!\* MAY THE WISHES OF YOUR MOTHER AND YOUR OWN AMBITIONS BE FULFILLED!



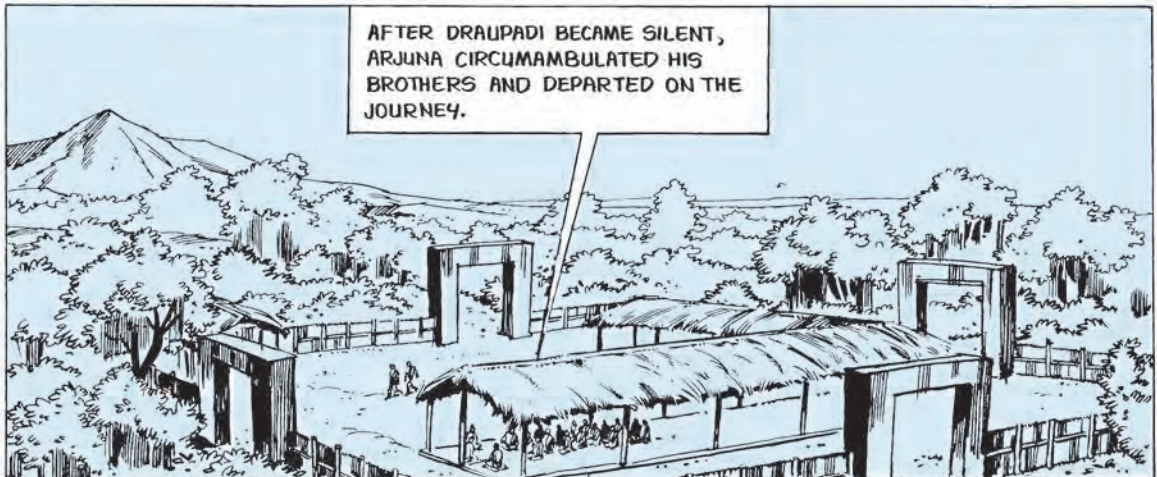
AFTER YOU GO IN QUEST OF THE WEAPONS, YOUR BROTHERS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY REMEMBER YOUR VALOUR AGAIN AND AGAIN. WE WILL FIND SOLACE NEITHER IN INDULGENCE NOR IN WEALTH.



I PRAY TO VASU, RUDRA, ADITYA, THE MARUTS AND ALL OTHER GODS— MAY THEY LOOK AFTER YOUR WELL-BEING.



AFTER DRAUPADI BECAME SILENT, ARJUNA CIRCUMAMBULATED HIS BROTHERS AND DEPARTED ON THE JOURNEY.



\* CONQUEROR OF WEALTH (ARJUNA).



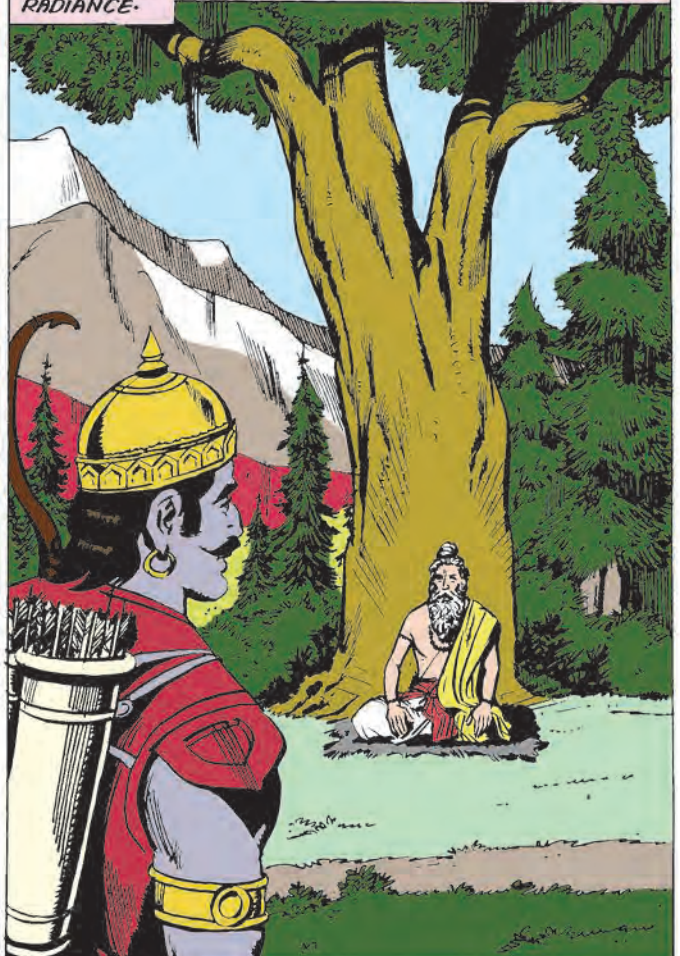
"EQUIPPED WITH THE YOGIC KNOWLEDGE OF PRATISMRTI, ARJUNA JOURNEYED AS SPEEDILY AS THE MIND AND REACHED IN A DAY'S TIME THE HOLY HIMALAYAS, THE ABODE OF THE GODS.



"WALKING INCESSANTLY OVER THE HIMALAYAS AND THE GANDHAMADANA MOUNTAIN, HE ARRIVED AT INDRAKEELA. SUDDENLY HE HEARD—

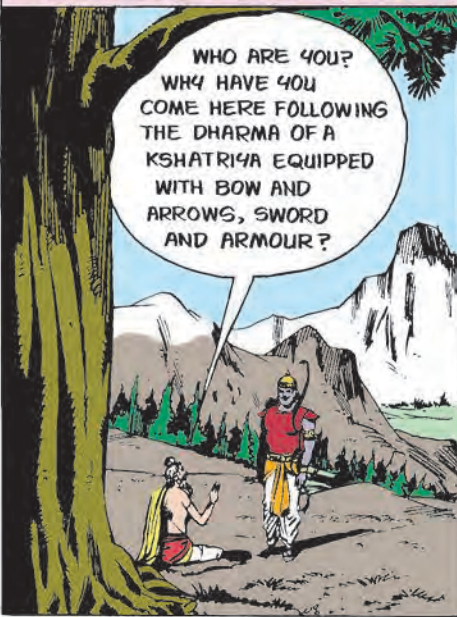


"THE PANDAVA LOOKED AROUND AND SAW AN ASCETIC WITH MATTED HAIR SITTING UNDER A TREE. HIS THIN, TAWNY-COLOURED BODY WAS GLOWING WITH A HEAVENLY RADIANCE.





"THE GREAT ASCETIC ASKED ARJUNA:



WHO ARE YOU?  
WHY HAVE YOU  
COME HERE FOLLOWING  
THE DHARMA OF A  
KSHATRIYA EQUIPPED  
WITH BOW AND  
ARROWS, SWORD  
AND ARMOUR?



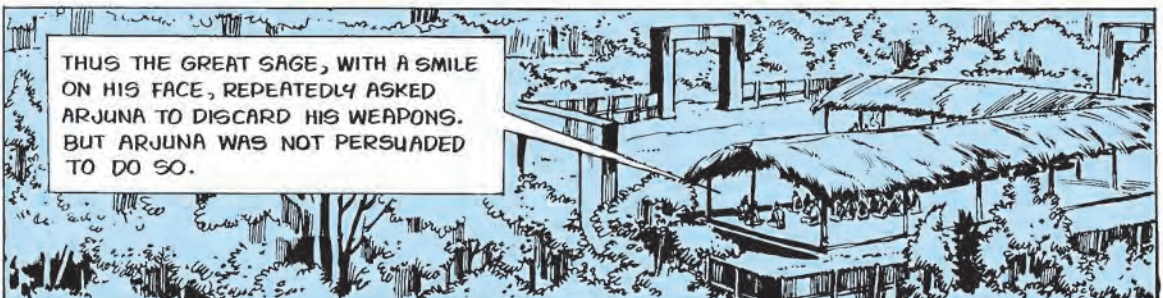
THIS PLACE IS THE  
HERMITAGE OF ASCETIC  
BRAHMANAS WHO ARE  
PEACE-LOVING AND  
DEVOID OF ALL  
PASSIONS.



THIS PLACE  
HAS NEVER BEEN  
A SCENE OF BATTLE  
AND SO THERE IS  
NO NEED FOR ANYONE  
TO CARRY  
WEAPONS HERE.



YOU HAVE  
ATTAINED YOUR  
FINAL GOAL BY  
COMING HERE. SO  
THROW AWAY YOUR  
ARMS.



THUS THE GREAT SAGE, WITH A SMILE  
ON HIS FACE, REPEATEDLY ASKED  
ARJUNA TO DISCARD HIS WEAPONS.  
BUT ARJUNA WAS NOT PERSUADED  
TO DO SO.



"PLEASED AND SATISFIED, THE BRAHMANA THEN SAID:

O DESTROYER  
OF ENEMIES, I AM  
INDRA. YOU MAY  
ASK ME A BOON.

"THEN, THE GALLANT ARJUNA, A JEWEL OF THE KURU  
FAMILY, BOWED TO HIM, AND WITH FOLDED ARMS, SAID:

O LORD!  
I HAVE COME TO  
ACQUIRE THE KNOWLEDGE  
OF ALL THE WEAPONS  
FROM YOU. PLEASE  
GRANT ME THIS  
WISH.

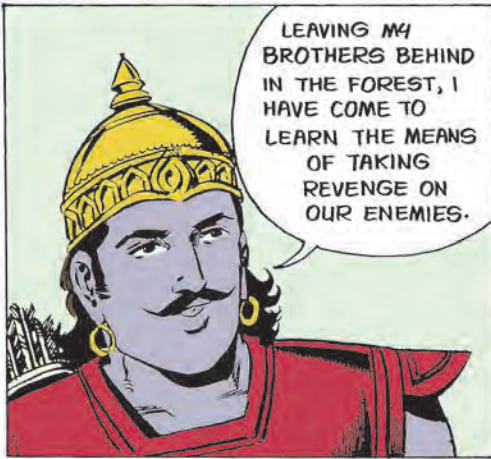
"INDRA SAID WITH A SMILE:

NOW THAT YOU  
HAVE REACHED HERE,  
WHAT DO YOU WANT  
WITH WEAPONS? YOU  
MAY AS WELL ASK  
FOR THE BEST LIFE  
IN THE HEAVENS.

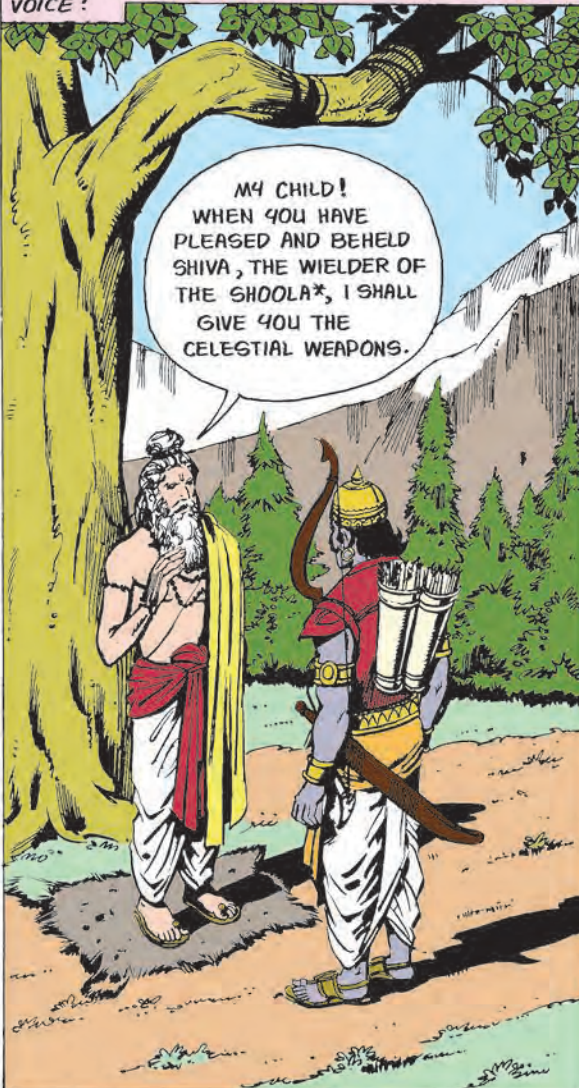
"DHANANJAYA REPLIED:

O KING OF DEVAS!  
I DO NOT HAVE ANY GREED  
OR LUST. NEITHER DO I  
DESIRE TO ATTAIN  
DIVINITY.





"AS ARJUNA SAID THIS, INDRA, THE DESTROYER OF VRITRA, COMFORTED HIM AND SAID IN A PLEASING VOICE :

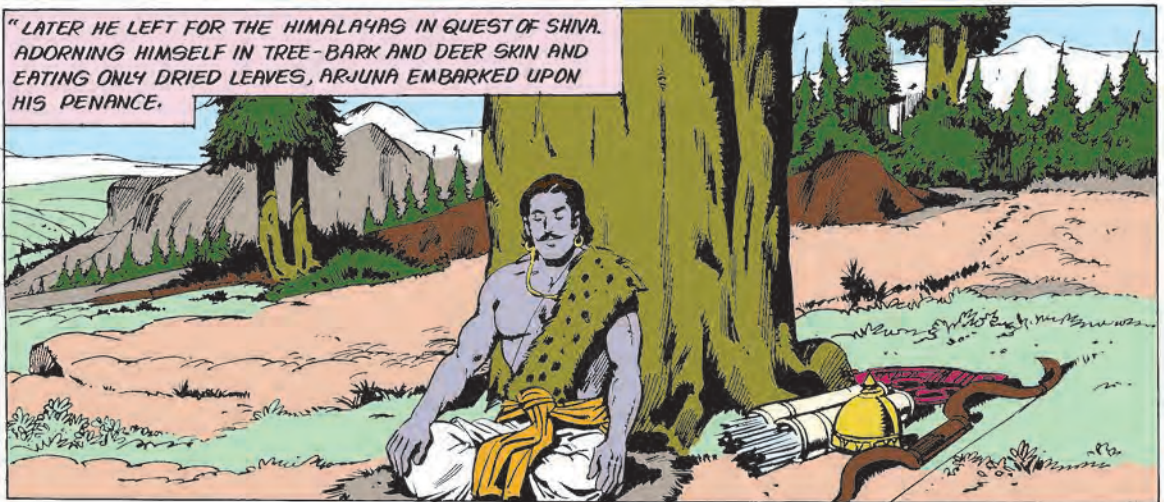


\* THE TRIDENT

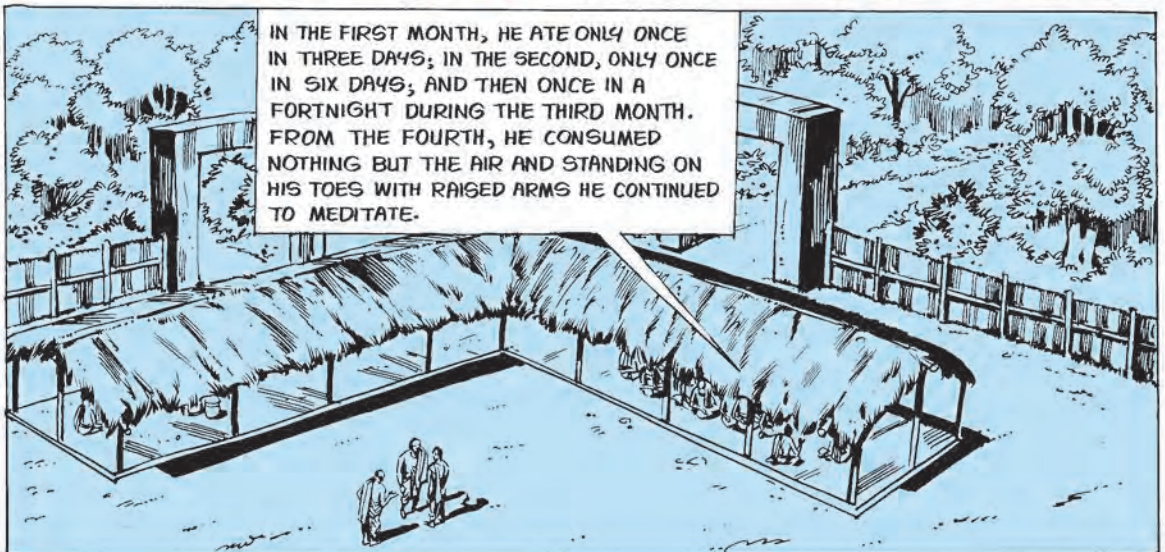




"LATER HE LEFT FOR THE HIMALAYAS IN QUEST OF SHIVA. ADORNING HIMSELF IN TREE-BARK AND DEER SKIN AND EATING ONLY DRIED LEAVES, ARJUNA EMBARKED UPON HIS PENANCE."

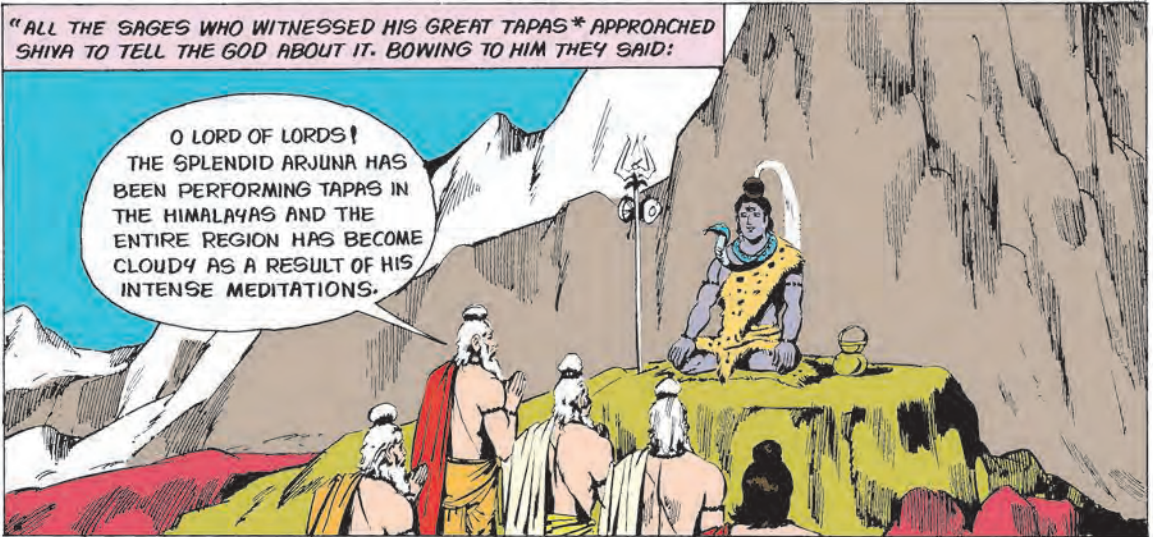


IN THE FIRST MONTH, HE ATE ONLY ONCE IN THREE DAYS; IN THE SECOND, ONLY ONCE IN SIX DAYS, AND THEN ONCE IN A FORTNIGHT DURING THE THIRD MONTH. FROM THE FOURTH, HE CONSUMED NOTHING BUT THE AIR AND STANDING ON HIS TOES WITH RAISED ARMS HE CONTINUED TO MEDITATE.

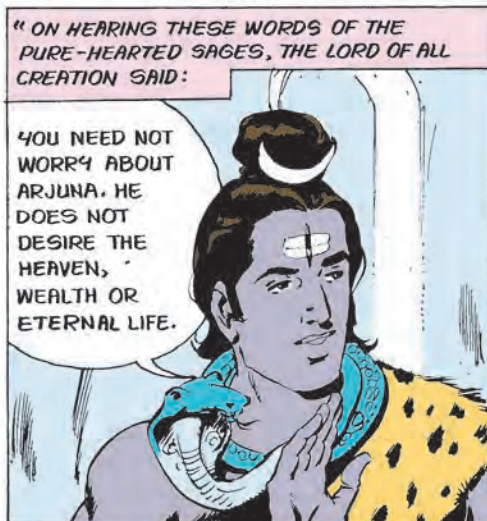




"ALL THE SAGES WHO WITNESSED HIS GREAT TAPAS\* APPROACHED SHIVA TO TELL THE GOD ABOUT IT. BOWING TO HIM THEY SAID:



"ON HEARING THESE WORDS OF THE PURE-HEARTED SAGES, THE LORD OF ALL CREATION SAID:



\* SEVERE PENANCE.



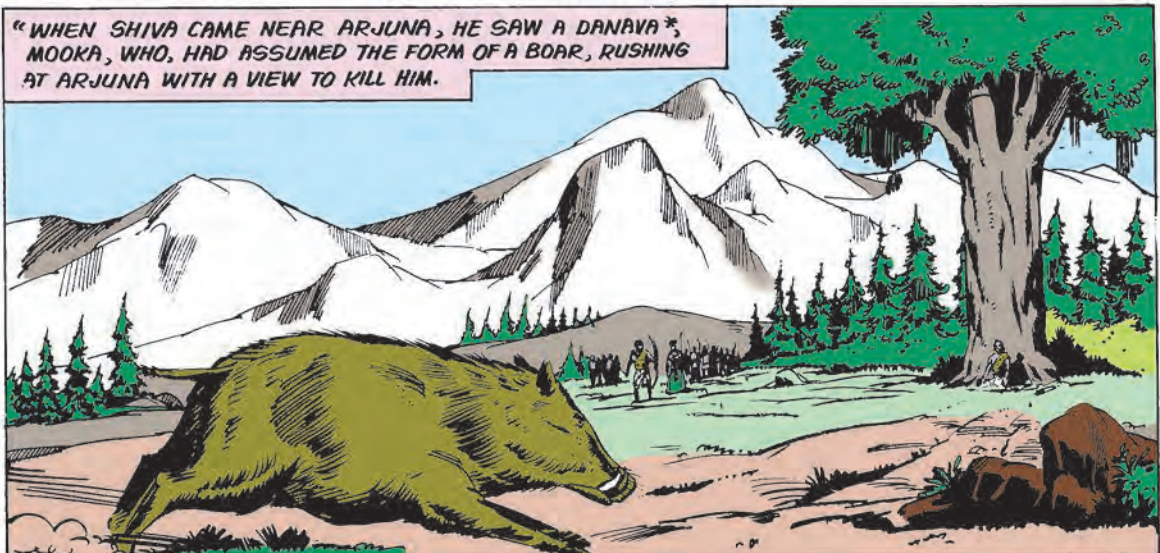
THUS ASSURED BY SHIVA, THE SAGES WENT BACK TO THEIR ABODES. AND SHIVA ASSUMED THE FORM OF A HUNTER AND HE GLOWED LIKE A GOLDEN TREE AND LOOKED AS HUGE AS IF HE WERE A SECOND HIMALAYA.



"HE TOOK HIS SHOOLA, HIS BOW AND HIS ARROWS WHICH WERE VICIOUS LIKE VENOMOUS SNAKES, AND CAME SPEEDILY TO WHERE ARJUNA WAS MEDITATING. WITH HIM CAME HIS CONSORT UMA, WHO WAS DRESSED LIKE A HUNTRESS AND SURROUNDED BY THOUSANDS OF WOMEN. HIS ASSOCIATES, DRESSED IN A VARIETY OF ATTIRES, CAME WITH HIM, TOO.



"WHEN SHIVA CAME NEAR ARJUNA, HE SAW A DANAVA\*, MOOKA, WHO, HAD ASSUMED THE FORM OF A BOAR, RUSHING AT ARJUNA WITH A VIEW TO KILL HIM.



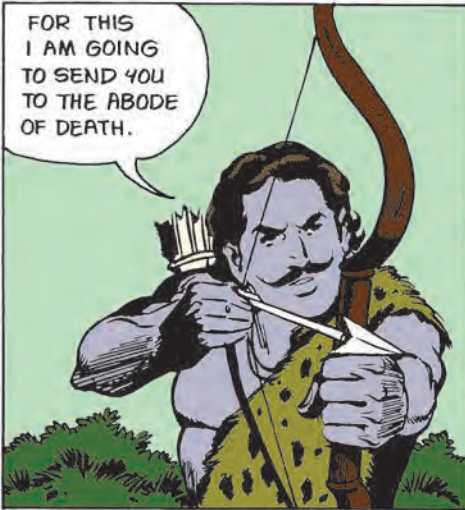


"AND SEEING THIS ARJUNA PICKED UP HIS GANDEEVA, MOUNTED ON IT HIS SNAKE-LIKE ARROW AND SAID TO THE BOAR:

O WICKED ONE!  
I HAVE CAUSED YOU  
NO HARM AND  
YET YOU WANT  
TO KILL ME.

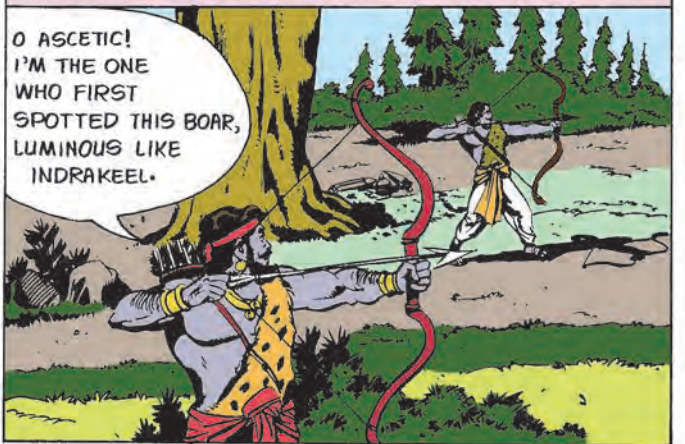


FOR THIS  
I AM GOING  
TO SEND YOU  
TO THE ABODE  
OF DEATH.

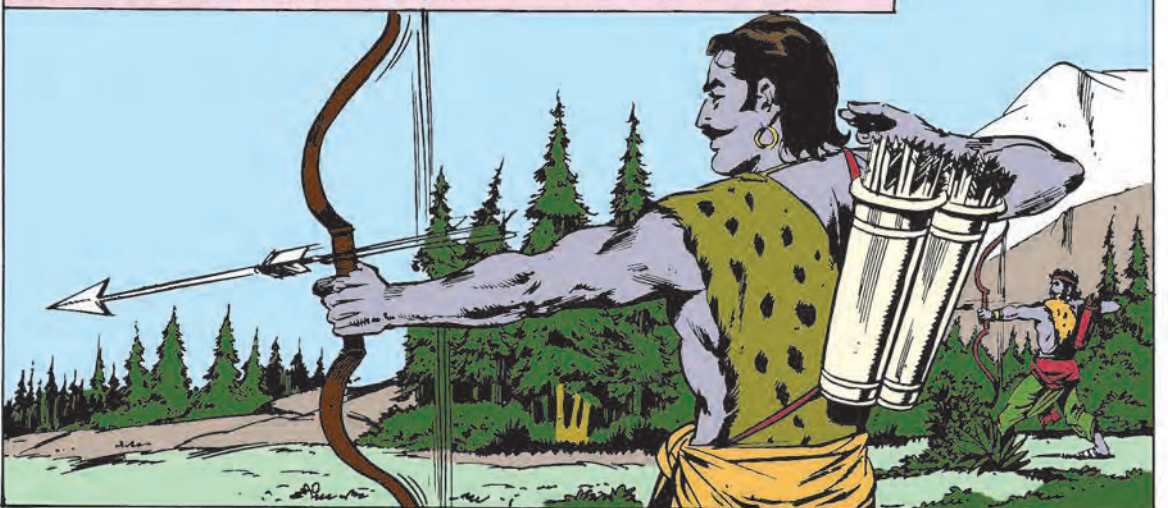


"BUT JUST THEN SHIVA, IN THE GUISE OF A HUNTER STOPPED ARJUNA FROM SHOOTING AND SAID:

O ASCETIC!  
I'M THE ONE  
WHO FIRST  
SPOTTED THIS BOAR,  
LUMINOUS LIKE  
INDRAKEEL.



"WITHOUT PAYING ANY HEED TO HIM, ARJUNA SENT AN ARROW AT THE BOAR.

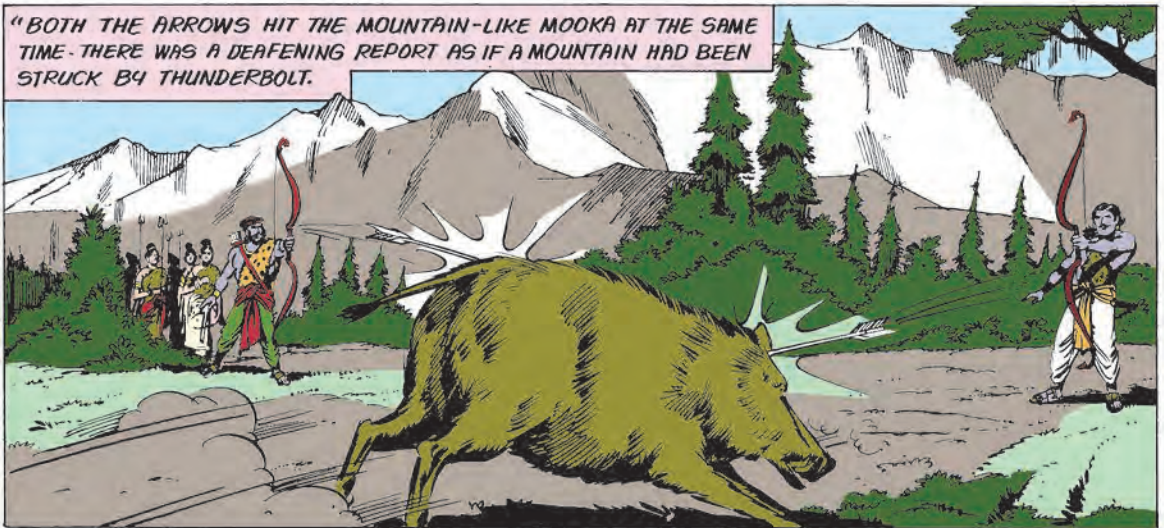




"AT THE SAME MOMENT, THE HUNTER ALSO DESPATCHED HIS ARROW WHICH FLEW ACROSS LIKE A THUNDERBOLT."



"BOTH THE ARROWS HIT THE MOUNTAIN-LIKE MOOKA AT THE SAME TIME. THERE WAS A DEAFENING REPORT AS IF A MOUNTAIN HAD BEEN STRUCK BY THUNDERBOLT."



"LATER, PIERCED WITH MORE ARROWS DESPATCHED BY BOTH ARJUNA AND THE HUNTER, THE BOAR DIED, ASSUMING HIS ORIGINAL FORM OF A DANAVA."





"THEN ARJUNA, LOOKING AT THE HUNTER, SAID WITH A SMILE:

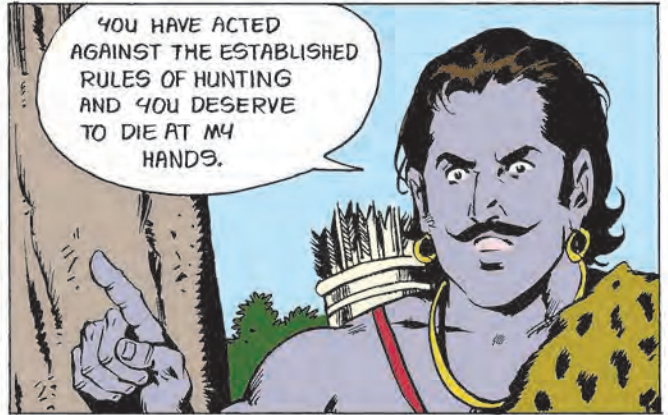
WHO ARE YOU, ROAMING  
WITH WOMEN IN THIS  
DEADLY FOREST? ARE  
YOU NOT  
AFRAID?



AND WHY  
DID YOU SHOOT  
THE BEAST AFTER  
I HAD SHOT  
IT?

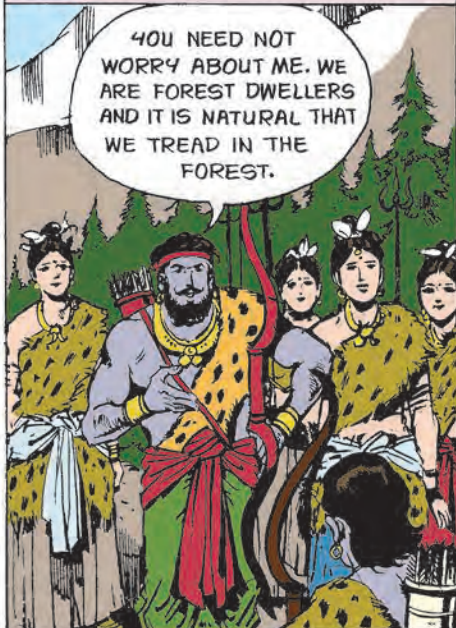


YOU HAVE ACTED  
AGAINST THE ESTABLISHED  
RULES OF HUNTING  
AND YOU DESERVE  
TO DIE AT MY  
HANDS.

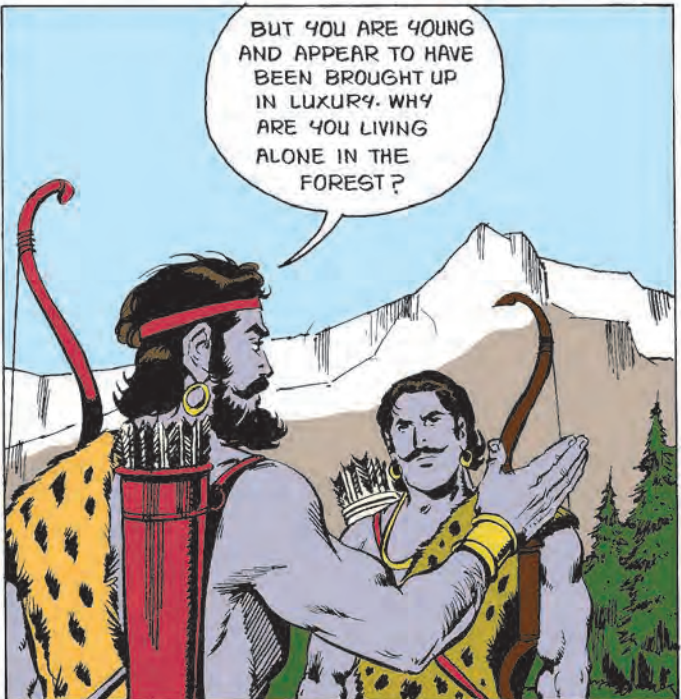


"HEARING THESE WORDS OF ARJUNA,  
THE HUNTER LAUGHED AND SAID:

YOU NEED NOT  
WORRY ABOUT ME. WE  
ARE FOREST DWELLERS  
AND IT IS NATURAL THAT  
WE TREAD IN THE  
FOREST.



BUT YOU ARE YOUNG  
AND APPEAR TO HAVE  
BEEN BROUGHT UP  
IN LUXURY. WHY  
ARE YOU LIVING  
ALONE IN THE  
FOREST?



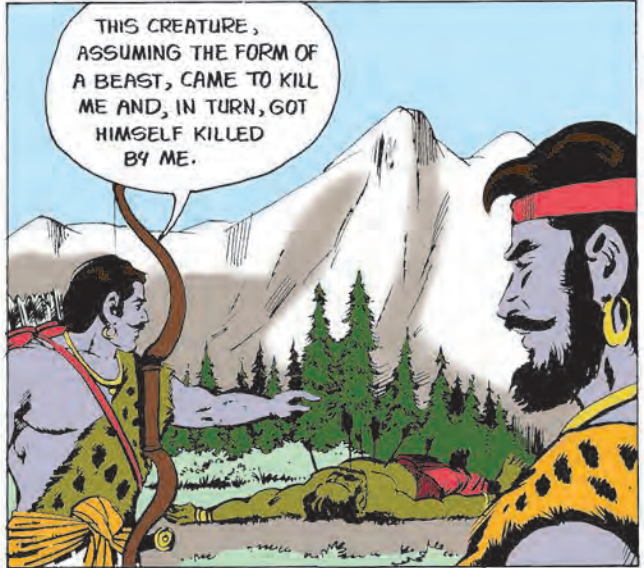


"ARJUNA SAID:

I LIVE WITHOUT  
FEAR LIKE THE SECOND  
KARTTIKEYA IN THIS GREAT  
FOREST WITH MY GANDEEVA  
AND OTHER FIERY  
WEAPONS.



THIS CREATURE,  
ASSUMING THE FORM OF  
A BEAST, CAME TO KILL  
ME AND, IN TURN, GOT  
HIMSELF KILLED  
BY ME.

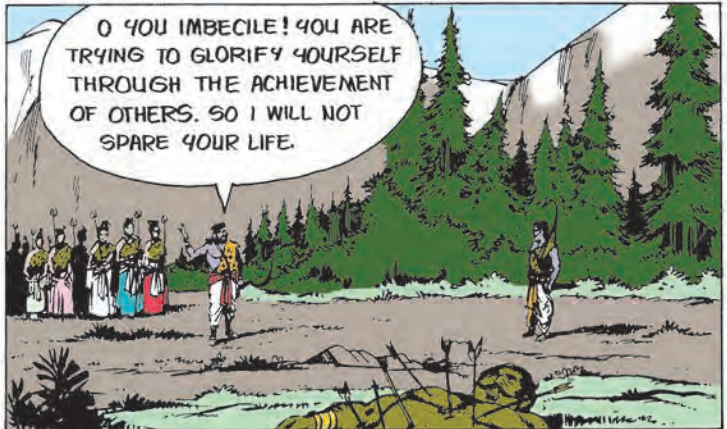


"THE HUNTER SAID:

IT WAS I  
WHO AIMED AT  
HIM FIRST. AND  
HE HAS FALLEN  
TO MY  
ARROWS.



O YOU IMBECILE! YOU ARE  
TRYING TO GLORIFY YOURSELF  
THROUGH THE ACHIEVEMENT  
OF OTHERS. SO I WILL NOT  
SPARE YOUR LIFE.



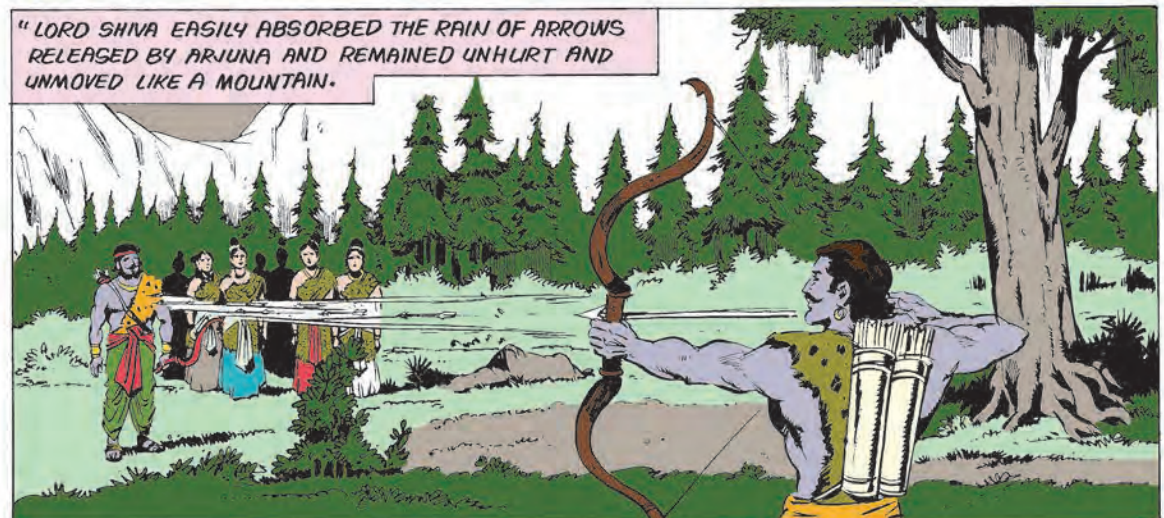
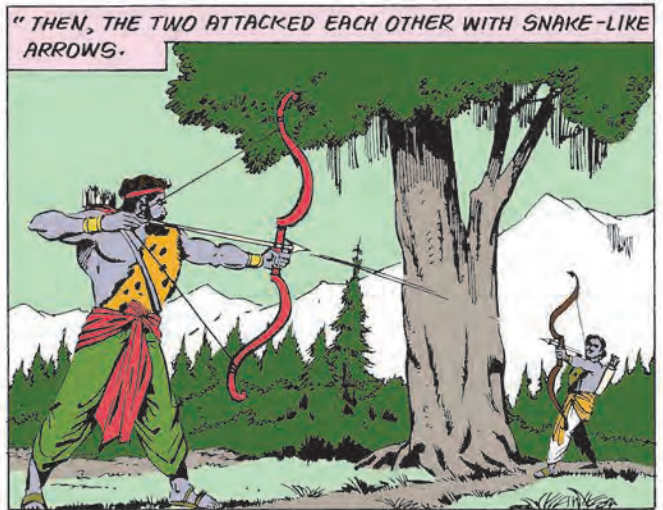
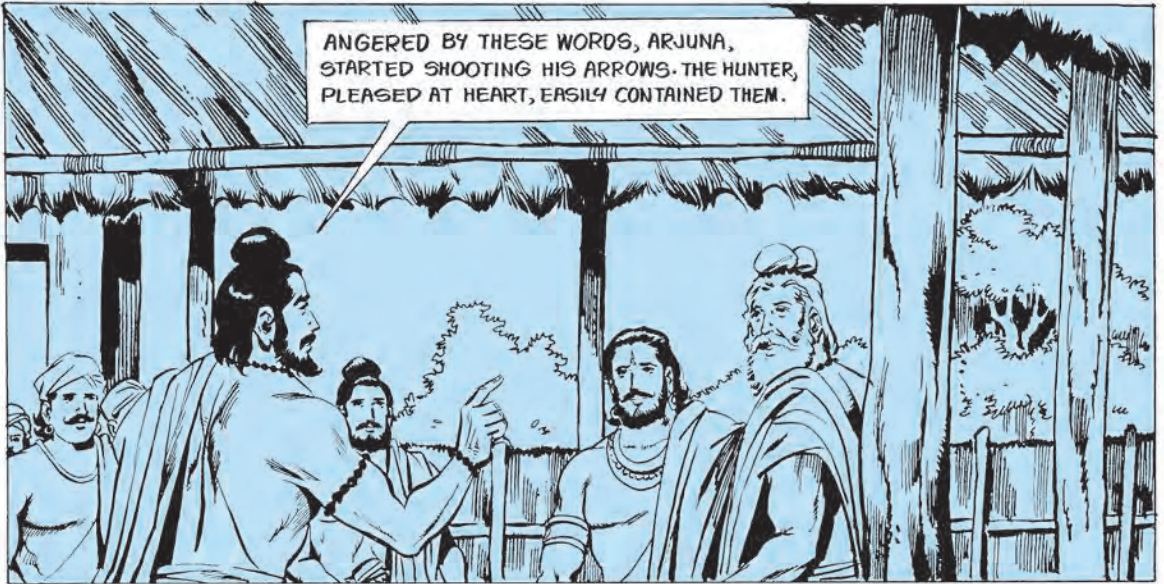
BE READY! I AM  
NOW RELEASING MY  
ARROWS ON  
YOU.



SHOOT AS YOU  
PLEASE.

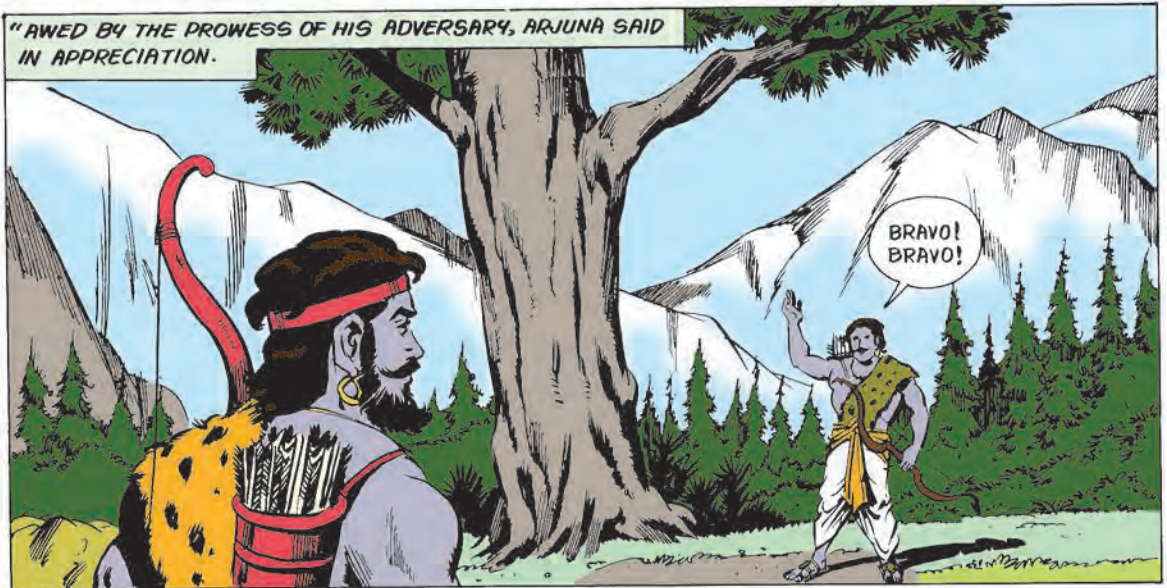




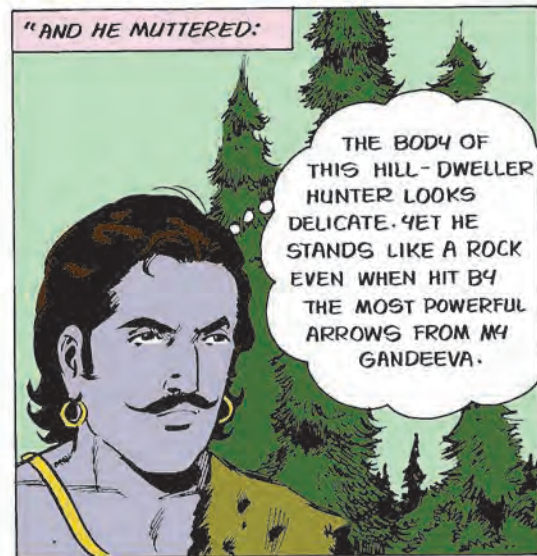




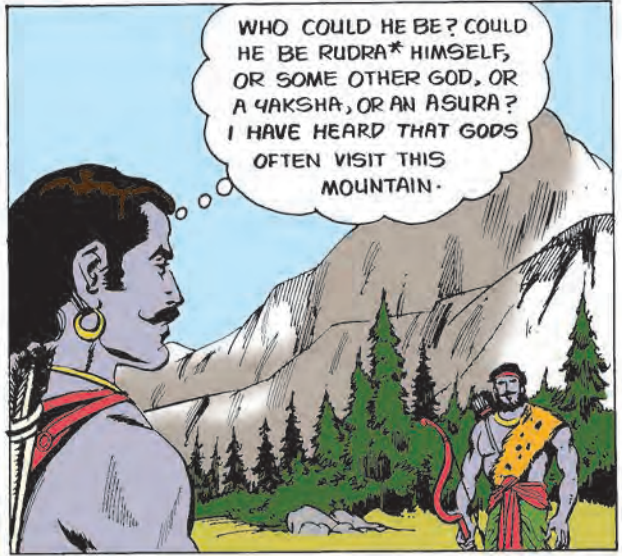
"AWED BY THE PROWESS OF HIS ADVERSARY, ARJUNA SAID IN APPRECIATION.



"AND HE MUTTERED:



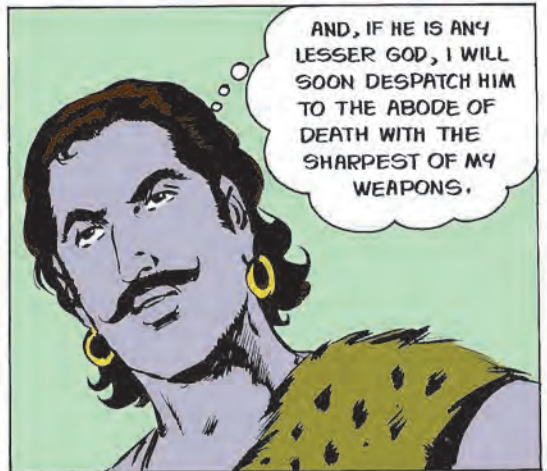
THE BODY OF THIS HILL-DWELLER HUNTER LOOKS DELICATE. YET HE STANDS LIKE A ROCK EVEN WHEN HIT BY THE MOST POWERFUL ARROWS FROM MY GANDEEVA.



WHO COULD HE BE? COULD HE BE RUDRA\* HIMSELF, OR SOME OTHER GOD, OR A YAKSHA, OR AN ASURA? I HAVE HEARD THAT GODS OFTEN VISIT THIS MOUNTAIN.

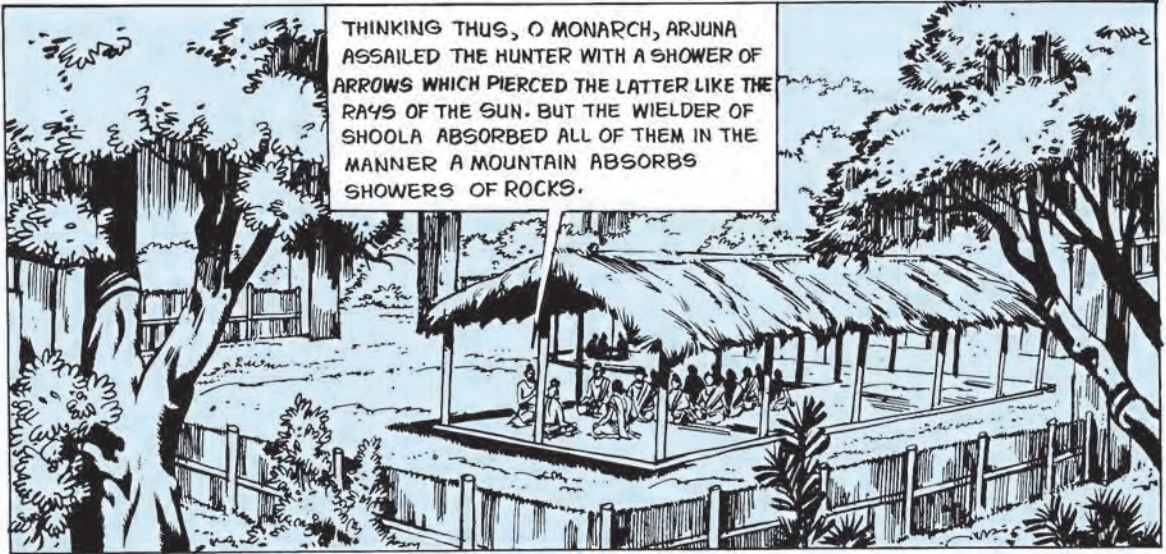


SHIVA ALONE, AND NONE OTHER CAN CONTAIN MY SHOWER OF ARROWS.



AND, IF HE IS ANY LESSER GOD, I WILL SOON DESPATCH HIM TO THE ABODE OF DEATH WITH THE SHARPEST OF MY WEAPONS.



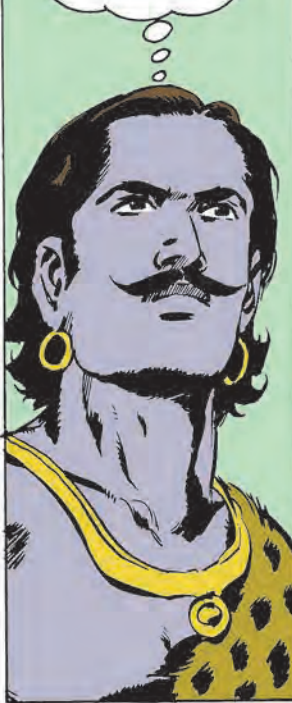


"SOON ARJUNA NEARLY EXHAUSTED HIS ARROWS AND BECAME GREATLY ALARMED. HE REMEMBERED THAT HIS TWO QUIVERS PRESENTED BY AGNI AT THE TIME OF THE KHANDAVA-DAHANA WERE INEXHAUSTIBLE.



"HE AGAIN WONDERED:

WHO COULD BE THIS HUNTER WHO IS NOT AFFECTED BY MY ARROWS?



LET ME DESTROY HIM WITH THE TIP OF MY BOW.





"THINKING THUS, ARJUNA ATTACKED THE HUNTER WITH HIS BOW AND ENCLOSING HIM WITHIN THE BOW-STRING, STARTED HITTING HIM WITH HIS THUNDER-LIKE FIST."



"THE HUNTER SNATCHED AWAY ARJUNA'S CELESTIAL BOW AND HAD IT CONCEALED IN HIMSELF."



"THEN ARJUNA, DESIROUS OF ENDING THE BATTLE, TOOK A SWORD AND HIT THE HUNTER ON HIS HEAD. BUT THE SWORD, WHICH COULD CUT THROUGH A STONE, SHATTERED INTO PIECES AS SOON AS IT TOUCHED THE HUNTER'S HEAD."





" THEN ARJUNA STARTED HURLING TREES AND ROCKS.  
BUT THE LORD, IN THE GUISE OF A HUNTER, ABSORBED  
ALL THESE.



" THEN THE MIGHTY PARTHA\* STARTED FISTING THE INDOMITABLE HUNTER  
WHO RETURNED THE BLOWS, CAUSING MUCH PAIN TO THE SON OF KUNTI.



" THEN THEY WRESTLED WITH EACH  
OTHER AND WITH THE RUBBING OF  
THEIR BODIES SPARKS AND SMOKE  
EMANATED.



" THEN, SMOTHERED BY SHIVA IN A HUG, ARJUNA FELL TO  
THE GROUND LIKE A LIFELESS LUMP.



\* SON OF PRITHA (ARJUNA)



"AFTER REGAINING CONSCIOUSNESS, ARJUNA, HIS BODY SMEARED WITH BLOOD AND MIND FILLED WITH DESPAIR, GOT UP, CREATED A MUD-IMAGE OF A SHIVA-LINGA AND WORSHIPPED THE LORD WITH A GARLAND OF FLOWERS.



"AND LO! AND BEHOLD! THE GARLAND ADORNED THE HEAD OF THE HUNTER.

AH! IT IS LORD SHIVA HIMSELF. I AM BLESSED.

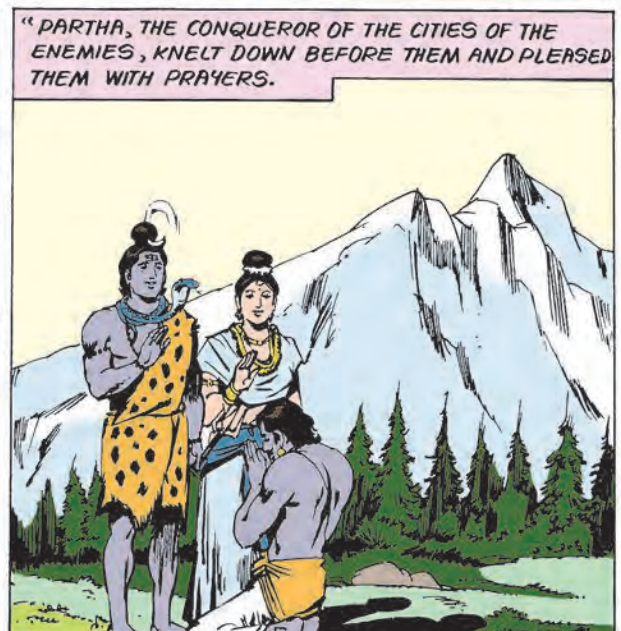
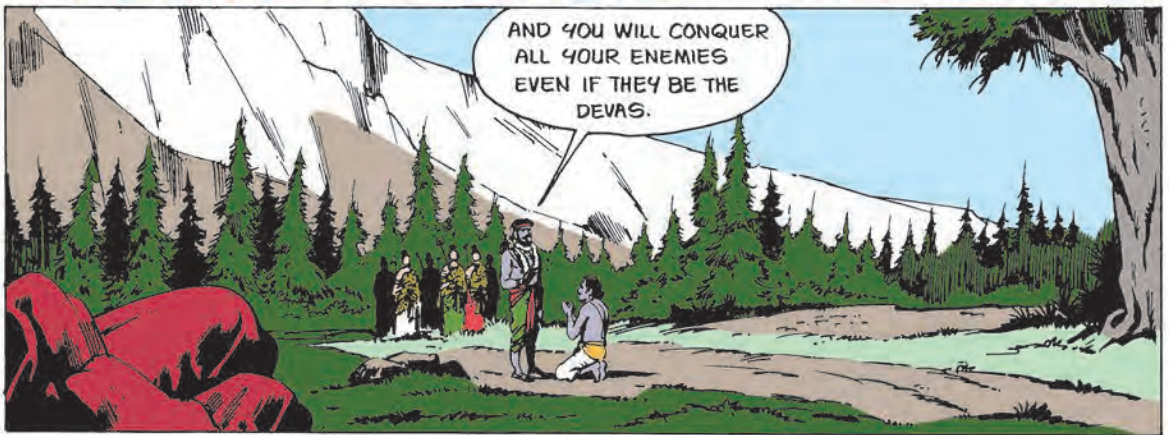


"HE FELL AT THE FEET OF THE LORD WHO SAID IN A VOICE AS MAJESTIC AS THE THUNDER.

I AM PLEASED WITH YOUR GALLANT EFFORT. THERE IS NO KSHATRIYA EQUAL TO YOU IN VALOUR.









"AND HE SAID:

O GOD OF GODS, I HAVE COME TO THIS MOUNTAIN, INHABITED BY ASCETICS, WITH THE DESIRE TO BEHOLD YOU.



BUT, O SHANKARA, I FOUGHT WITH YOU OUT OF IGNORANCE. PLEASE FORGIVE ME MY AUDACITY.



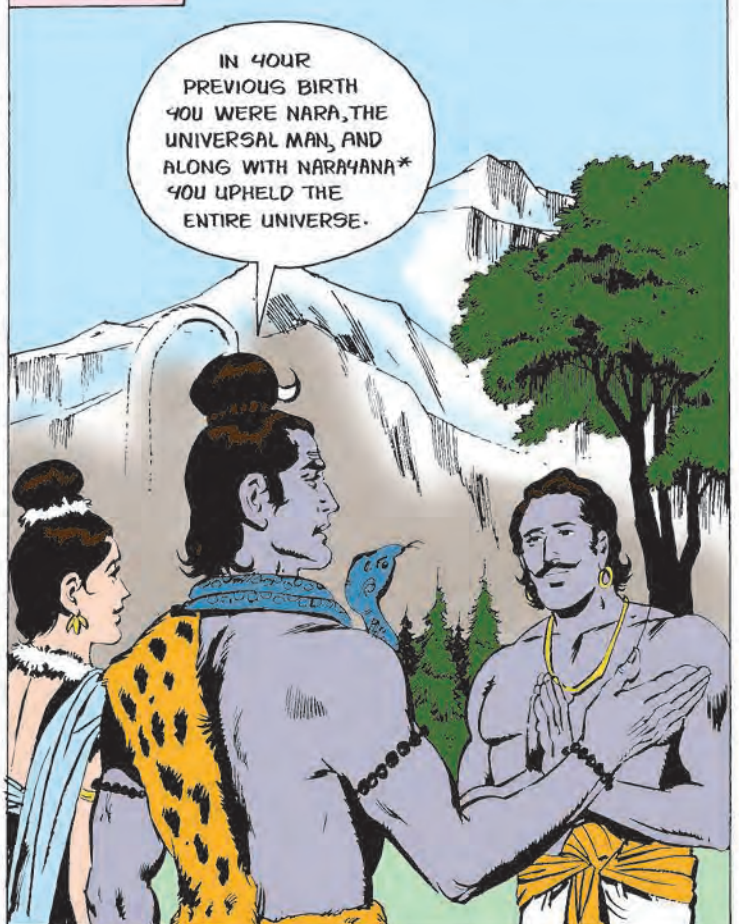
"THEN THE OMNIPOTENT GOD TOOK ARJUNA'S HAND AND SAID WITH A SMILE:

YOU ARE ALREADY FORGIVEN.



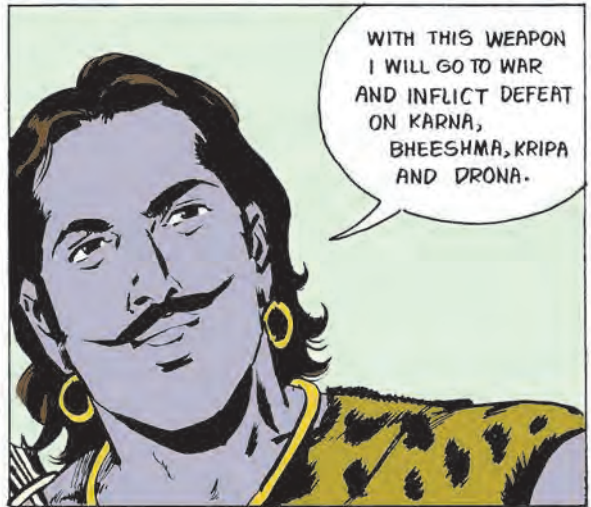
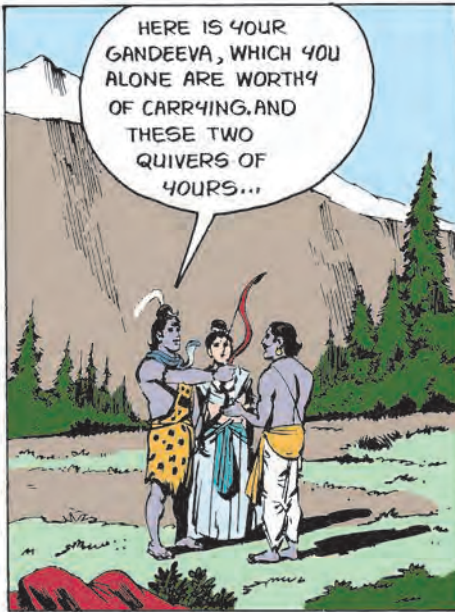
"THEN THEY EMBRACED EACH OTHER AND THE LORD, WHO HAS THE BULL FOR AN EMBLEM ON HIS FLAG, COMFORTED PARTHA, SAYING:

IN YOUR PREVIOUS BIRTH YOU WERE NARA, THE UNIVERSAL MAN, AND ALONG WITH NARAYANA\* YOU UPHELD THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE.



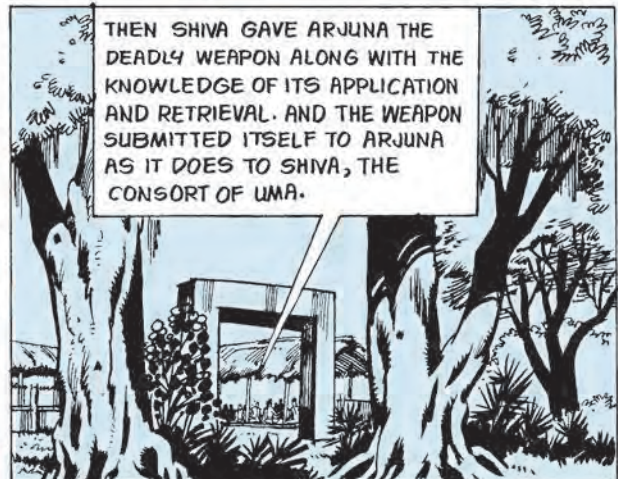
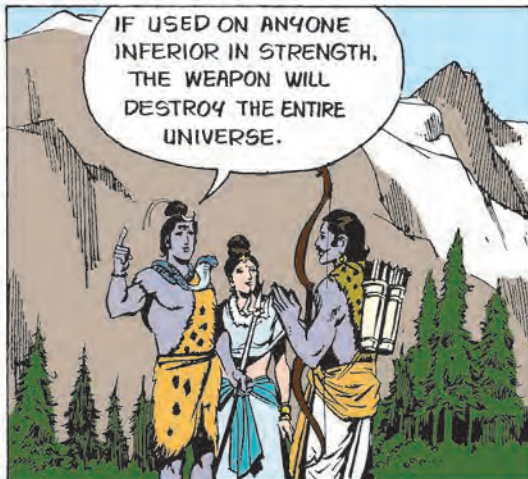
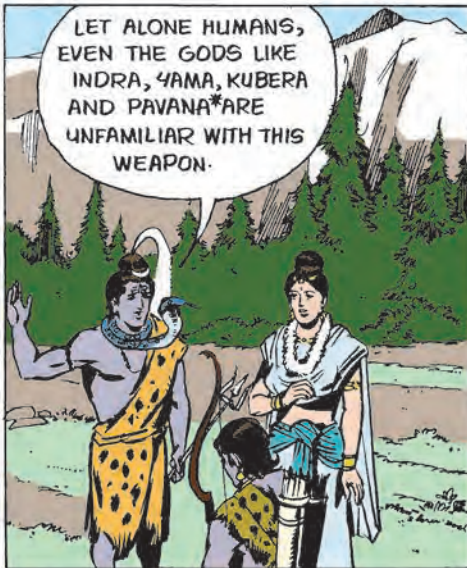
\* VISHNU







THE LORD SAID:



\* GOD OF WIND



"AS SOON AS ARJUNA TOOK POSSESSION OF THE WEAPON, THE EARTH, ALONG WITH ITS MOUNTAINS, FORESTS, TREES, OCEANS, CITIES AND VILLAGES TREMBLED. AND THE SKY AND THE WIND VIBRATED WITH THE SOUND OF THOUSANDS OF CONCH-SHELLS, DRUMS AND TRUMPETS.



"AND THE DEVAS AND DANAVAS CAME OUT AND WITNESSED ARJUNA ACCEPTING THE MIGHTY AND RADIANT WEAPON.

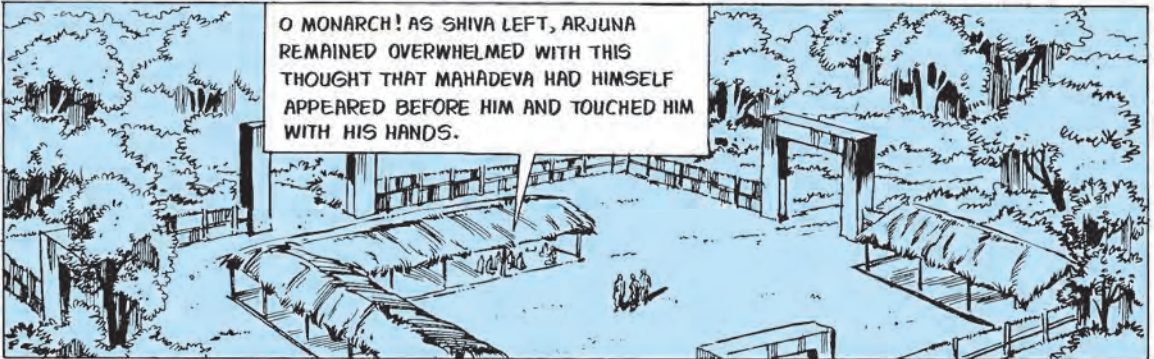




"THEN, INSTRUCTING ARJUNA TO PROCEED TO HEAVEN, THE LORD OF THE DEVAS, ACCOMPANIED BY UMA, ROSE TO THE SKY AND DISAPPEARED.



O MONARCH! AS SHIVA LEFT, ARJUNA REMAINED OVERWHELMED WITH THIS THOUGHT THAT MAHADEVA HAD HIMSELF APPEARED BEFORE HIM AND TOUCHED HIM WITH HIS HANDS.

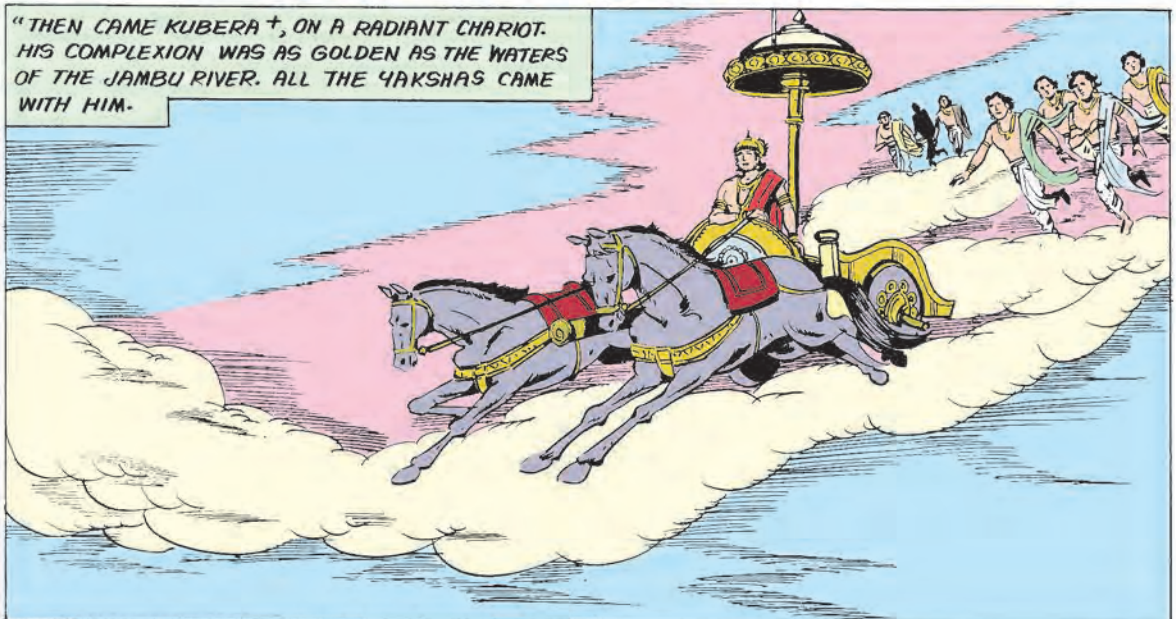
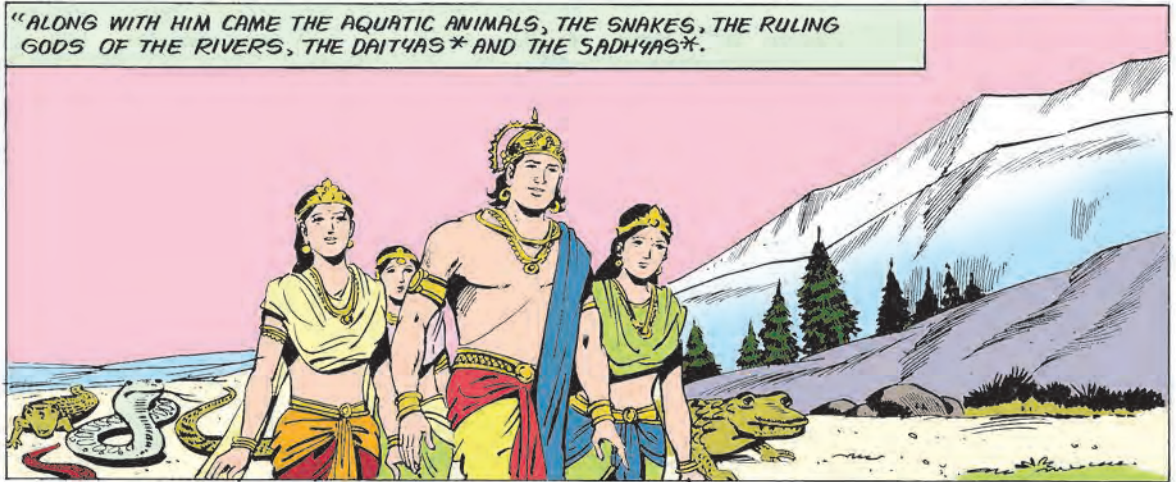
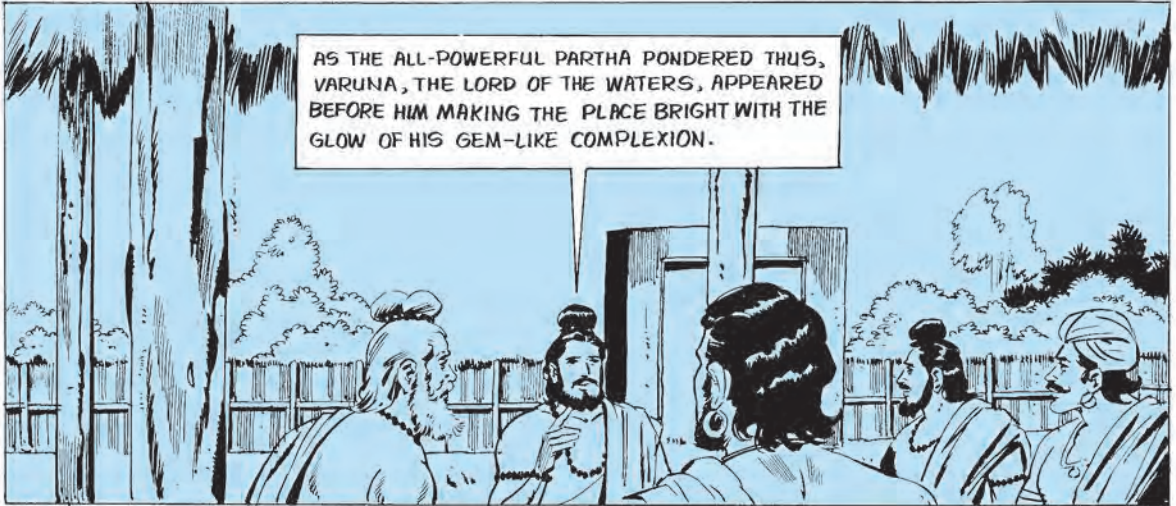


"AND THEN HE THOUGHT :

I HAVE  
ATTAINED MY  
GOAL! I HAVE AS  
GOOD AS  
CONQUERED MY  
ENEMIES!



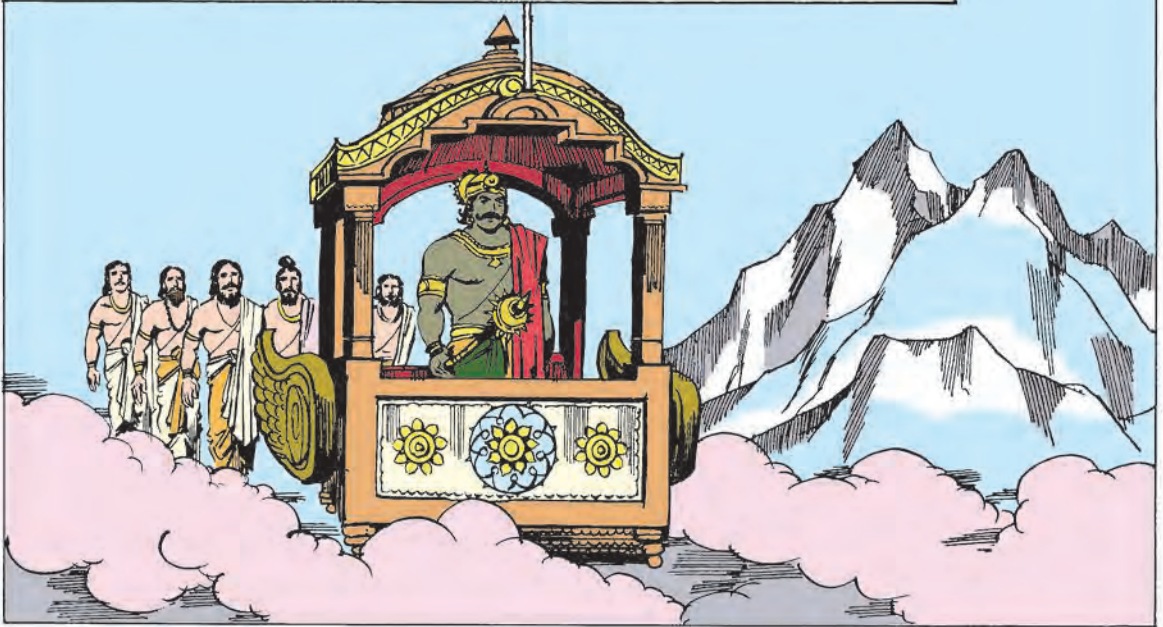




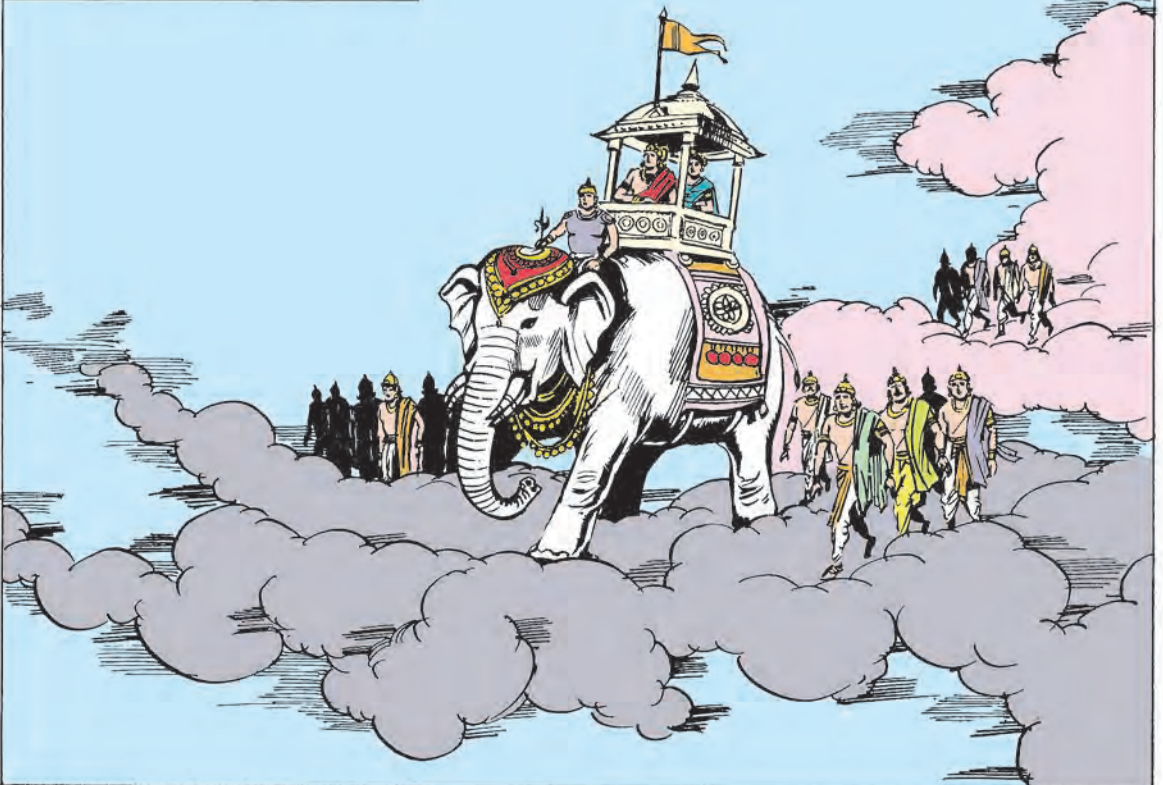
\* DIFFERENT KINDS OF BEINGS    † GOD OF WEALTH.



"IN ANOTHER VIMANA\* CAME YAMA, THE GOD OF DEATH, THE DESTROYER OF ALL THE CREATURES. HE, THE SON OF SURYA, CARRIED IN HIS HAND THE DANDA, THE ROD OF DESTINY, AND CAME WITH THE ANCESTRAL SPIRITS OF MEN, IN HUMAN FORMS.

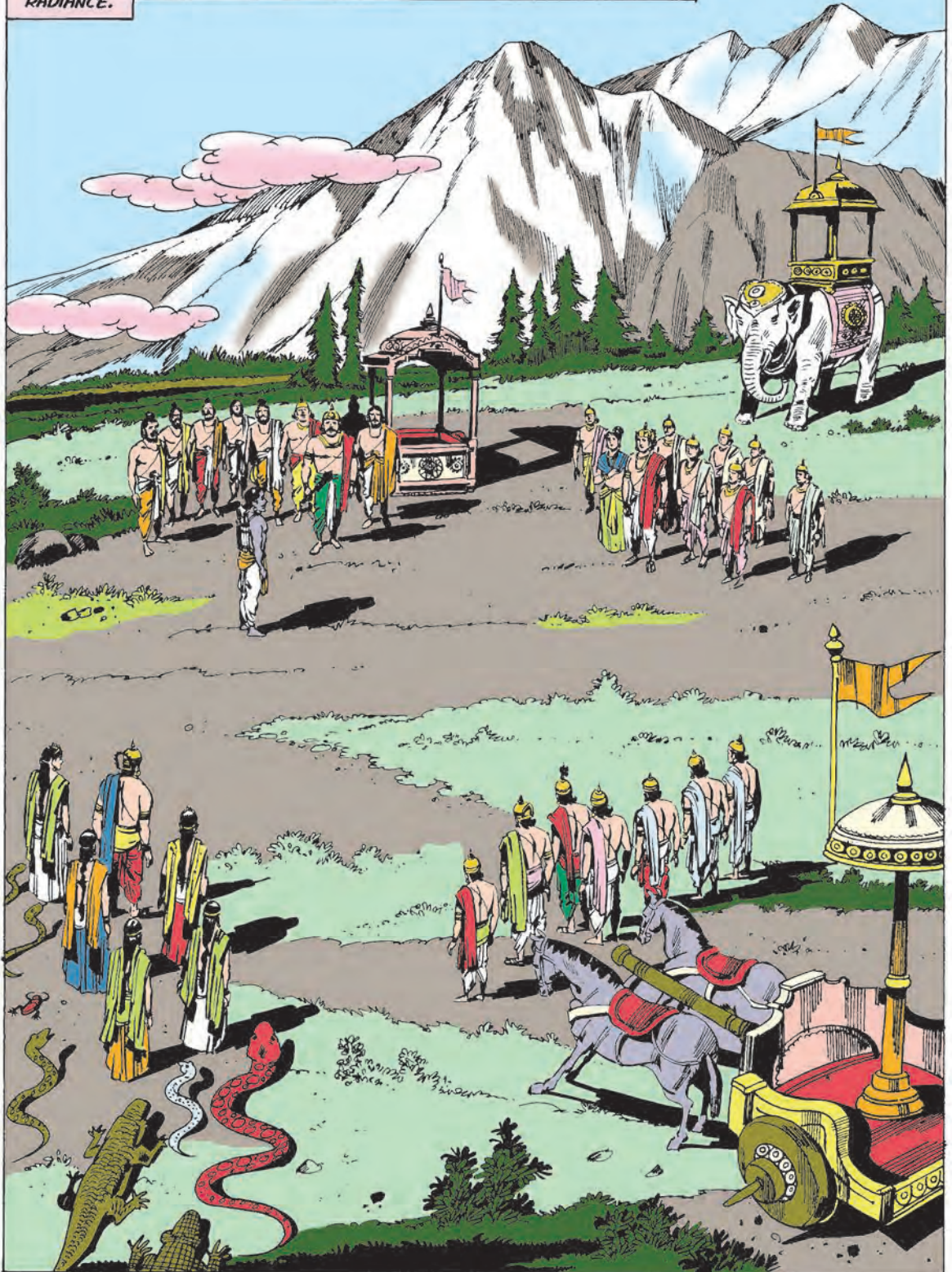


"IMMEDIATELY AFTER THAT, CAME INDRA, THE KING OF DEVAS, RIDING ON HIS ELEPHANT AIRAVATA. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY HIS CONSORT, INDRANI\*\*, AND ALL THE DEVAS.



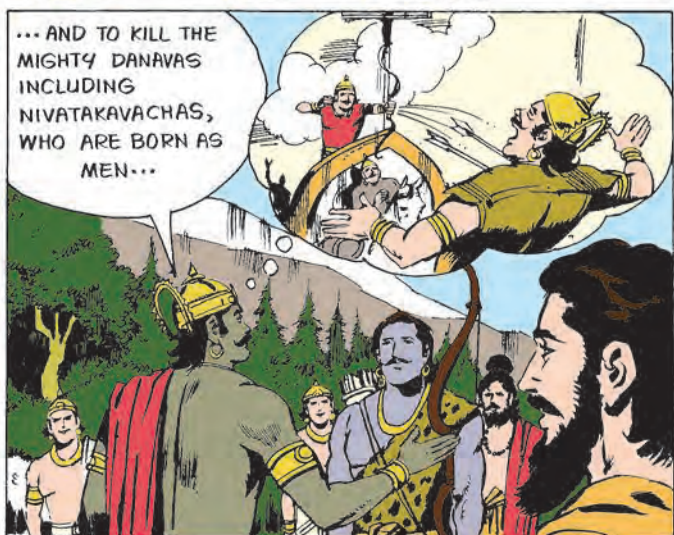
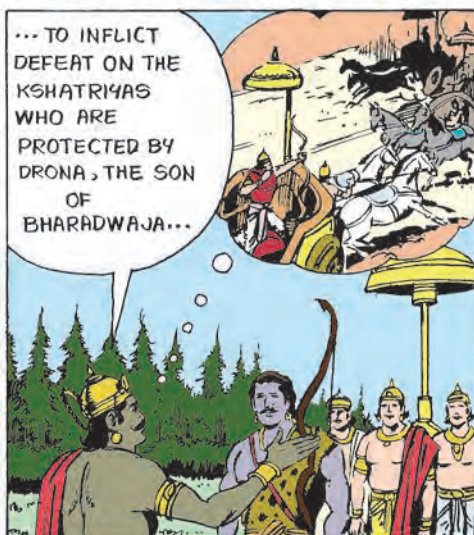
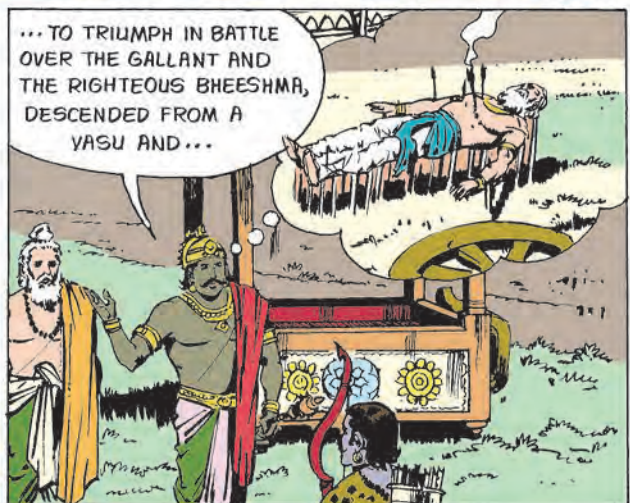
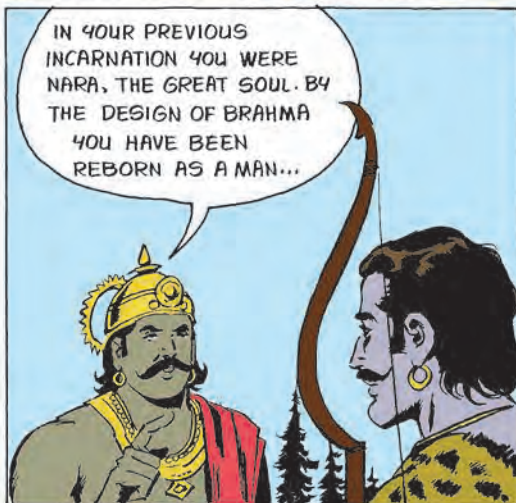


"THEY ALL DESCENDED ON THE GLOWING AND COLOURFUL PEAK OF THE GREAT MOUNTAIN AND WATCHED ARJUNA WHO NOW HAD IMMEASURABLE RADIANCE."

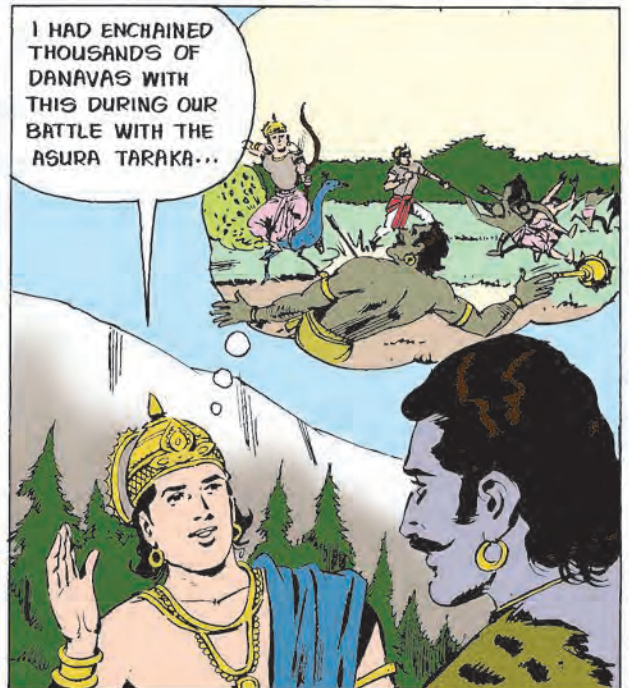
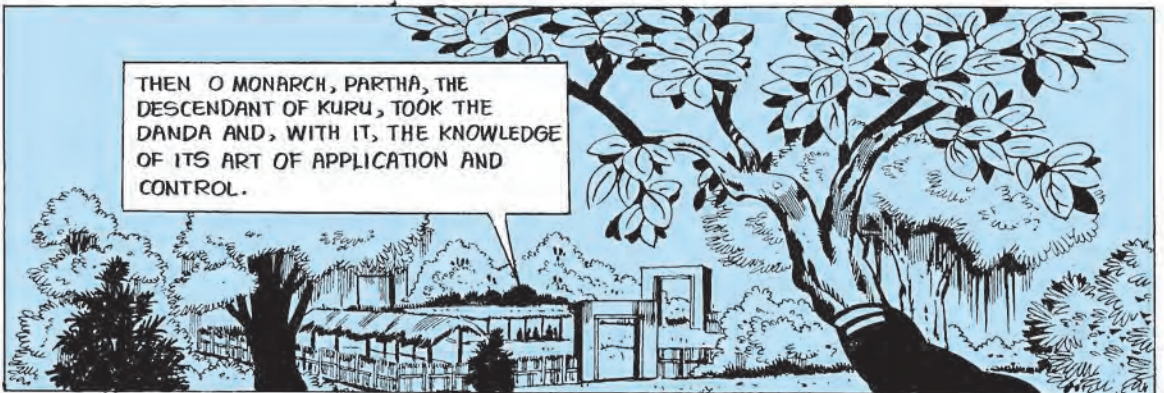
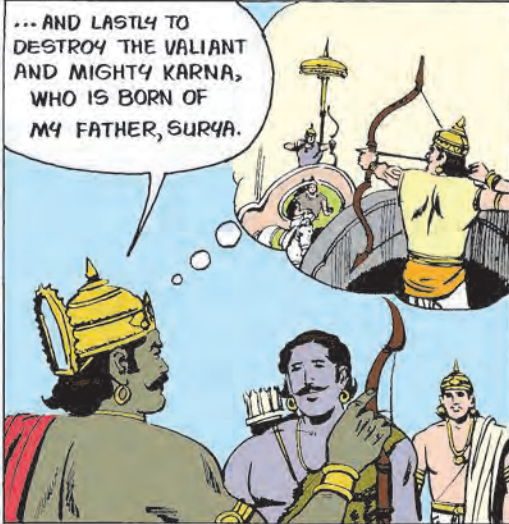




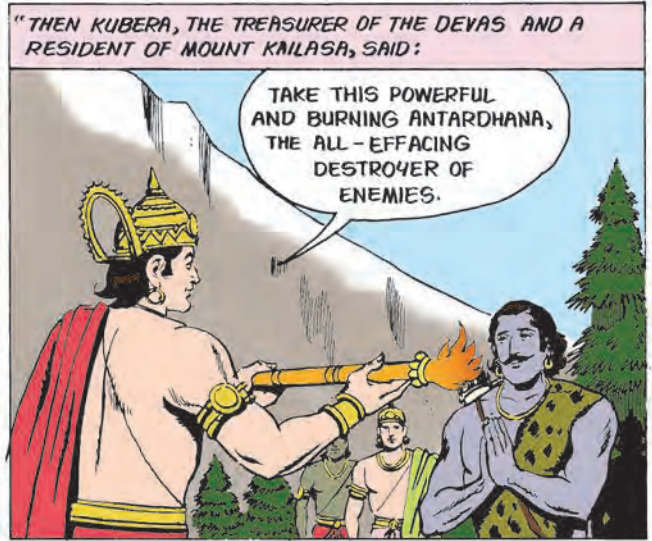
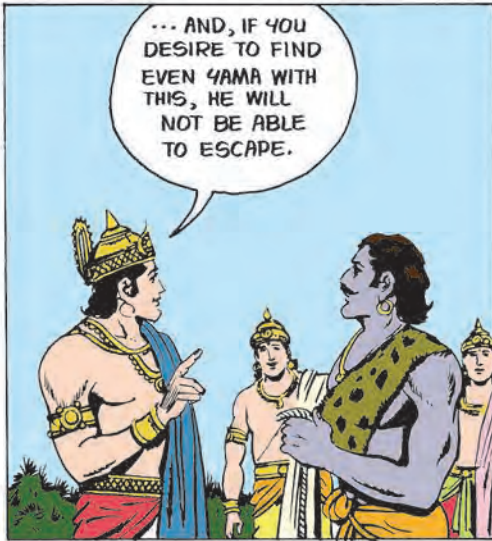
"THEN YAMA, THE MASTER OF DHARMA, WHO HAD STATIONED HIMSELF IN THE SOUTH, SAID IN A THUNDERING VOICE:















“ THEN DHANANJAYA, AWESTRUCK ON SEEING ALL THESE LOKAPALAS, DEVOTEDLY WORSHIPPED THEM WITH FRUITS AND WATER.

